

THE
Third and Last Volume
OF THE
Sermons,
OR
DECLARATIONS
OF
Mr. *Stephen Crisp,*

Late of *Colchester in Essex,* Deceased.

Exactly taken in Characters, or Short-Hand, as
they were Delivered by him at the Publick
Meeting-Houses of the People called

QUAKERS,

In *Grace-Church-Street, Devonshire-House,*
and *St. Martin's-le-grand, London.*

And now Faithfully Transcribed and Published:
With some of his Prayers after Sermon.

L O N D O N,
Printed in the Year, 1707.

THE Works of this Author have obtained such general Esteem, that many are desirous nothing of his should be lost: I have already published two small Volumes of his Sermons, the First containing Eight, and the Second Ten of his Declarations; and the Acceptance they have gain'd from Persons of different Perswasions, has induced me to emit this Third and Last Collection, containing Twelve Sermons more, upon several necessary Subjects, none of which have been yet Printed; one of them being his last Sermon, preached at *Devonshire-house, London*, a while before his Death: So that now these are all of the Author's, which are to be expected from

A. C.

*The Contents of the Three Volumes of the
Sermons or Declarations of Mr. Stephen
Crisp.*

THe First Volume contains Eight Sermons
upon the following Subjects.

- I. The great Mediator of the Everlasting Cove-
nant.*
- II. Heart Preparation for receiving the Gospel.*
- III. The First and Great Commandment.*
- IV. The Standard of Truth.*
- V. The necessary Duty of remembring our Creator.*
- VI. The Divine Monitor, or Light from Heaven.*
- VII. The Inward Preacher, or the Office of Con-
science.*
- VIII. Saving-Faith the Gift of God alone.*

THe Second Volume contains Ten Sermons
upon the following Subjects.

- I. Truth's Testimony against the Power of Sin
and Satan.*
- II. Bearing the Cross, the right Mark of a Chri-
stian.*
- III. The Spirit of Christ the only true Guide.*
- IV. Pure and Spiritual Worship.*
- V. The Divine Life of Christ Jesus.*
- VI. The Kingdom of God within.*
- VII. The undefiled way to Eternal Rest.*
- VIII. The dawning of the Day of Grace and
Salvation.*
- IX. The*

The Contents.

IX. *The Excellency of Peace with God.*

X. *True Christianity.*

THE Third and Last Volume contains Twelve Sermons upon the following Subjects.

I. *The mighty Work of Man's Redemption.*

II. *The Word of God a Christian's Life.*

III. *The necessity of an Holy Life and Conversion.*

IV. *Baptism and the Lord's Supper, asserted.*

V. *Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life.*

VI. *Captive Sinners ransomed by Jesus Christ.*

VII. *The Sheep of Christ hear his Voice.*

VIII. *No true Worship without the right Knowledge of God.*

IX. *The wonderful Love of God to Mankind.*

X. *Salvation from Sin by Jesus Christ.*

XI. *The acceptable Sacrifice.*

XII. *Christians should often think on the Name of the Lord: Being his last Sermon, preached at Devonshire-house, a while before his Death.*

Sermon

Sermon I.

The Mighty Work of Man's Redemption.

Preached at Grace-Church-Street, Feb. 8. 1687.

My Friends,

WE are met upon the most weighty Affair that can be to every one of us, even to wait that we may have a true Knowledge of the beginning, carrying on and perfecting the mighty Work of Redemption, that People may know that Redemption is wrought in their Souls; for every ones Soul hath been lost and captivated, and led away from the pure Presence of God; all have been alienated by reason of Sin, which hath been an universal Wall of Partition, and hath excluded and shut out unholy Souls from the Holy God; all that have been defiled and polluted, they have been excluded from his Dwelling-Place, they have been driven out into the World, and the World hath become a World of Misery, and of Distraction and Confusion to the Sons and Daughters of Men; there hath been *Anguish, Tribulation and Wrath* upon all their Souls, and an insensibility hath happened

pened unto many, that they have not been apprehensive of the great Depravation they have lain under, and they have not been sensible of the Glory of that State and Condition which they were to have enjoyed, and in that State of Insensibility they have not sought after the Lord, but have been *captivated and led away by divers Lusts and Pleasures*, by which they have wounded their own Souls more and more.

And in such a State as this it is, that the Lord hath found us; he hath sought us out, and he hath found us *cast out into the open Field, and wallowing, as it were, in our own Blood*; and yet this hath been a *Time of Love*; and he hath manifested his Love to us in this respect, in that he hath awakened us and brought us to a sense of our depraved and deplorable Condition, and given unto a Remnant to perceive, that there is a *more excellent Glory*, a more excellent Enjoyment to be had, than any this World can afford.

But a great many of those whose Eyes are so far opened, that they can see and discern a more excellent Glory, yet they cannot receive it, for they are not in a Capacity for the Enjoyment of it; many have the Glimmerings, and some little sight of Heavenly Things, but they themselves are Earthly. Many perceive there is a holy Life, but it is not theirs, for their own Life is unholy, and yet they know there is a Life that is Holy and Pure. Hereupon Desires are begotten, by the Divine Word of Life in the Sons and

Daughters

Daughters of Men, through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator; by him Desires are be-
otten in People that they might come to en-
joy that Life of Holiness, that they might not
only see a better State than what they do en-
joy, but that they might come to enjoy it,
and have it for theirs.

There is an universal Desire in People that
they might have Eternal Life, and they be-
lieve there is an Eternal Life to be enjoyed;
but every one hath it not, and the Reason is,
because they are not fitted and prepared for
the Enjoyment of it; for it is a kind of Treas-
ure that is never put into an unclean Vessel;
there must be a cleansing and purifying, that
earthly Vessels may come to retain and
hold this Heavenly Treasure; and when it
comes to this, that People must be cleansed
and purified, here the World turns out to di-
vers Means and Methods; some have gone to
outward Washings, outward Cleansings and
Observations of this and the other Ordinance,
and when all that hath been done, they them-
selves being Judges, were yet unclean; when
they have done all that lies in their Power
and Ability, towards their Washing and Clean-
ing, and towards preparing themselves, they
have found some secret Testimony in their
own Consciences that their Hearts were still
unclean, and that there was Defilement still
biding and lodging in the Secret of their
souls; and this hath put a great many to a
stand, what they would do; when they have
come

come to the end of all, they know not what to do: Many have cried secretly, What shall we do to be saved? For all that we can do, cannot save us. We have retained this, and the other Doctrine, follow'd this and the other Way, and made many Observations; but all this doth not cleanse our Soul, nor *purge our Consciences from dead Works*, this will not bring us to the Inheritance of that Immortal Life that will give us Satisfaction. We hear many speak of Satisfaction, and of *Joy unspeakable and full of Glory*; but here is a Weight and Burthen still lies upon our Souls.

Therefore, my Friends, that all such who are brought so far, as to be under such a Burthen and Oppression, that they might be informed and come to understand, where the true Rest is, and where that Power can be found, that is able to answer those tender Desires that are begotten in them; for this cause hath the Lord our God communicated and given the Dispensation of the Gospel of his Son, unto a Remnant whom he hath sanctified, that they might *Speak a Word in Season to the weary Soul*. This is not a day to make a mock of Sin, this is not a day to make a Covenant with Death and Hell, and to resolve to go on in a wicked Life, and to continue in it all their Days.

But yet there are a sort of People that desire to have a *Word spoke in Season* to them when they are a weary. How many are there in our Age and Generation, that one may reckon

reckon of this number, that are Sinners, and overcome by their Lusts and Corruptions, and by the Temptation of *Satan* and his Instruments? But they are weary of it, it is a Burthen to their Souls, it costs them many a bitter Tear, many a Sigh, and many a sad and sorrowful Thought in secret, that they should have a sight of a *more excellent Glory*, and of a better Life than that of their own, and yet know not how to get into it.

My Friends, that same Divine Word of Life, by which any of the People of the Lord, in any Age, were ever restored, redeemed and purchased again to the Lord; that Word of Life must have been at work in their Hearts, and hath been at work in them, or else thou hadst never been so far opened; there hath been something that hath unstopped thine Ears, that thou might'st hear; and the reason of thy Continuance in thy Bonds, after thy knowing something that might have freed thee, is, because thou hast not heartily closed with that which hath begun the Work, God by his redeeming Power in the Hearts of them that believe in Christ, to raise an Inclination in People to seek after the Lord.

You know what the Apostle saith, *It is not of us so much as to think a good Thought.* But this all People will grant is a good Thought, when a Sinner thinks of turning to God, and leaving his Evil Ways, if he had Power and Ability; and cries out, If I knew how to stand against Temptation, I would never sin against
the

the Lord more; this must be a good Thought in thy Mind: How came it there? Who is the Author of this Thought, you will say. This ought to be attributed to the Love of God in Christ, that he hath convinced and perswaded us; and that tho' there is Sin and Pollution, yet he hath not so forsaken us, as utterly to cast us off, he hath sent forth his *quickning Spirit, that is, the Lord from Heaven*, that he might stir up and quicken People to consider their Condition, and bring them to a sense of their present State, that they may come into a better State than they are in at present.

If this may be granted, that the Spirit of God, and the Grace of God is the Author of all these Desires, then it will be granted, at the same time, that every one of you ought to be sensible, that such Spiritual Desires stirring you, are from the Motion and Operation of the Spirit of God that hath raised them in your Souls; and then, I hope you will grant that if you had but joined with that Spirit, and with the Assistance of that Spirit, all things would have been possible thereunto.

So that here is the first thing that I would have every one satisfied about in their Understandings, whether they are totally exempted from any such Touches and Operations of God, or no; for it is said by some ignorantly That a great part of Mankind have never had any such Divine Workings of the Spirit of God upon them, in order to their Conversion

therefore

Therefore it is not in vain for you to consider your State and Condition; for if you, or I, or any here, be under such Circumstances, that we never had, nor are ever like to have any such Divine Operations or Touches of the Spirit of Life, in order to Conversion, then I am sure you and I had better never have been born.

If you will consider with your selves, and lay aside the Disputes of Doctors and Learn'd Men, you may know the things pertaining to your selves: Things relating to others, I may leave to Disputes alone about them; but as for things relating to my Salvation, I must have certain Knowledge of them. It concerns you (my Friends) to know within your selves, whether you have had such Divine Touches, workings and Operations upon your Hearts, as have inclin'd you to seek the Lord. I hope I may believe there are none here but have in their Hearts an Answer; I have had such Touches and Operations in me: This is great Evidence from God, more than any Tongue can set forth: You will be ready to say, I have not deserv'd this, I have not so behaved my self towards my Maker as to deserve that he should call upon me, and call upon me, *When wilt thou turn, and amend thy Life, and hearken to his voice that made thee? When wilt thou leave serving thy Enemy, and serve him that is thy right-Lord?*

So that now this is a greater Aggravation of

of our Sin to continue in it, and yet to have a Belief that God is still waiting upon us, and that he hath such a kindness for us, as not to touch our Hearts by the inward Operation of his Spirit and Grace, in order to Conversion.

Now when this is agreed, and Men settle themselves in the belief of this, you know what the Consequence will be. When I consider with my self, I that have been under these Workings, have been rebellious, wicked and disobedient to God, yet the Lord is not so angry as utterly to cast me off, but is still waiting to be gracious, by the Operation of his Spirit, to gather me to himself, in order to sanctifie me, and heal my Backsliding, to cure my Weakness and Infirmities, and at the last to save me, and make me an Heir of his Eternal Kingdom: What is the Consequence of this Love? Why, the next Resolve must be this, I will either rebel against his Grace, and resist his Power, or I will submit to him; Which of these is the best way, the safest way?

Are there not a great many in this Age that are as sensible of the Workings of God's Grace for their Conversion as ever you and I were, that are as sensible that God hath called them to Holiness and Righteousness, as any of us can be, and yet they have resisted the Grace of God? They have said in their Hearts, We will not submit to this Power, that will make us so holy, and so watchful, and so careful, diligent and obedient, for this very Reason,

cause it will cross my Interest, it will cross my Pleasure, it will hinder my Preferment in the World, and my Reputation among Men; and for this Reason I will not bear this Yoke. I would be glad to hope there are none such here, that have made such a *Covenant with Death and Hell*, and yielded themselves up to the Devil, to serve him all their Days.

Let us, who are at this Time, and at this Meeting, under the Operation of God's Grace, and to feel the Lord calling us by his Grace, and working upon us by his Spirit; let us enter together into a holy solemn Resolution, That we will obey this good Spirit, and take him for our Leader, and submit, though it should be to a Cross: Thus People will think they will come to this Resolution, when the Work of Redemption is begun in their Souls, and when they are convinced of their Sin, and their Eyes are opened to see the way of Holiness; and though they never take a Resolution to walk in it, yet every one shall be convinced, and see there was a better way than their own, and be convinced by the Grace of God one time or other, that in respect of God's working of it, it is a beginning; but in respect of Men that should join with the Operation of God, it is not beginning, for he hath no desire to those things which he doth not know, he still depends upon himself; but when the Soul comes to be satisfied, that it is the Visitation of God, and joins himself to him in a holy Resignation of his own Will,

and faith, This is the Lord, he is come to work upon me, he is come to change and alter the Frame of my Mind: It is the Lord, let him do what he will; here is a Mind brought to submit to the Grace of God, God is able to do that for him which he cannot do for himself.

When People come to the right Object of their Faith, and act their Faith upon that Object, they every Day find a Progress, a going forward in the Work of Grace, according to the Work of Grace in their Souls; and there is a Power that enclines them to believe; it is not for such to cry, If they had Power, they would do more; he that hath the Spirit of Grace, the Spirit of Christ that had *all Power in Heaven and Earth* given to him, to put it forth on purpose for the bringing back of Men and Women home to God; he that hath this Object of Faith before him, he will not look for Power in his own Will and Affections to redeem him, he expects a Power to be daily ministred and dispensed to him, as he hath need of it, thro' the Lord Jesus Christ who is present with him, in all his Trials and Temptations: He cries, Here is a Temptation that will carry me away, O Lord help me, *Put forth the Arm of thy Power and save me*, plant thy Fear in my Heart and deliver me, *Their Eyes shall see their Saviour*, saith the Prophet.

Thus when a Man comes to be joined to the right Object of Faith, and doth exerci-

and put forth lively Acts of Faith upon Christ, his Eyes shall see his Saviour, the Light that shines into his Heart, discovers to him the Temptation, and it also shews him a Redeemer at hand; his Saviour is nigh him, and he trusteth in him, and relies upon him, and says, This Word of God is in my Heart, and I do really believe, that although the Temptation that assaults me be strong, yet it shall not prevail; whether it be the Profits, the Pleasures, or the Honours of the World. If I put my trust in this Power, I cannot go near the Evil; I am a Christian, I am entred into a Covenant in Christianity, that I will join with nothing but what God approves of; now when I have represented to my Mind the Temptation of the Devil, and that Evil which he sets before me, and I know it is contrary to the Mind of God, How can I go into that Evil, and break my Covenant with God, after I have entred into Covenant with him, to love him, serve him, and obey him? The Power of Grace upon such Souls, the Operation of Grace is so powerful, that the Temptation comes and goes, and they are saved and delivered out of it, because God helpeth them; but if they comply with the Temptation, then *Tribulation, Wrath and Anguish* pursues all such as are rebellious and disobedient to the Will of God.

Now this Redemption is carried on gradually, from day to day, the Truth that thou believ'st, it operates by degrees; thou art delivered, first from one evil Practice, and then

from another evil Work; but there is a great deal more, thou rejoycest and art glad that thou art delivered from one Sin, but thou wouldest be more glad to be delivered from them all: I speak to those that are serious for their immortal Souls, when they see themselves delivered out of one Evil, that they were ready to run into, they would be glad if they were redeemed out of every Evil, that that their Crofness and Peevishness, their forwardness and Wantonness were removed, they should be glad to be delivered from all their Sins.

What do you think, say some, that a Man, while he liveth here, may come to see all Sin, all Evil and Corruption brought under, and nothing but Holiness, and Righteousness and Truth remain in him, and that there shall be nothing but Simplicity and Innocence? Do you think that such a thing can be?

Why should not I think so? You will grant me, That the Power of Grace is able to get such Power and Victory over Sin and Corruption, that you may come to hate it as much as ever you have loved it, if you grant me that, the Consequence will follow, he that gave me Victory over Sin, can give me Power over all Sin. All Christians believe, That God's Power is Infinite; the Scripture testifies, *All things to be possible to God, with whom we have to do*: If all things be possible to God, sure this is possible; there is nothing so contrary to God as Sin, and God will not suffer

the Devil always to rule his Master-piece, Man: Mankind is God's Master-piece, the most eminent Creature in this lower World, made after God's Likeness; and though the Devil hath brought Men into his own Likeness now, yet nothing can be more contrary to the Mind of God, than that the Devil should have the Rule of us, for God would have the Government of us himself.

When we consider the Infiniteness of God's Power, for destroying that which is contrary to him, who can believe that the Devil must ever stand and prevail? I believe it is inconsistent and disagreeable with the true Faith, for People to be Christians, and yet to believe that Christ, the Eternal Son of God, to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth is given, will suffer Sin and the Devil to have Dominion over them; *There is no other Name under Heaven by which I can be saved*, therefore I have put my Confidence in him: If the Devil must have the Rule of me here, then I cannot be subject to Christ in all things; I may go to Meetings, but can never master the Devil and his Temptations; this is as inconsistent with the Faith of a Christian, as Light with Darkness, and Christ with *Belial*: If Christians think themselves true Believers, then let them see how far their Faith will reach, whether it be like that Faith, *which was once delivered to the Saints*, for by that Faith their Hearts were cleansed, and they became free from Sin, *Rom. 6: 22. But now being made free from*

from Sin, and the Servants of God, saith the Apostle, you have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the end Everlasting Life; you were Servants to Sin, but now you are free from Sin; so that this Faith is but one, and if Men have got another, it will do them no good: Take heed thou art not mistaken about thy Faith.

I have heard some learned Men say, That a Believer is a Servant of Sin, and he is ever like to be so; but he is not at the same time free from Righteousness, for he hath the Righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and God looks upon him as Righteous in his Righteousness; there cannot be a more Anti-apostolical Doctrine, I may be a Servant of Sin and yet have the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness; I may be a Servant of Sin (say they) yet Christ is Righteous, he is the Righteousness of God, and he *hath fulfilled the Will of God, and hath purchased Salvation* for me, and he is the Object by which I am made Righteous.

Consider this, the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness will never do me good, 'till I come to partake of his Righteousness, 'till his Righteousness be made my Righteousness, in me, and for me: Christ is made *to us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*; so that if a Sinner, one that was a Sinner the other Day, come, through Faith in Christ, to have his Heart cleansed and purged, and true Righteousness planted in him, where Sin was planted: there Sin, through

the Blood of Christ is cleansed and purged away.

So that Christ is made Righteousness to me, and not his Righteousness barely imputed and reckon'd to me; *Christ is my Wisdom*, I am a Fool without him; Christ is made *Righteousness to me*; for my good Deeds and holy Living cannot be acceptable to God 'till they be done in him, and commended to God by him; the proper Work of Faith is, to fix the Soul on him that *worketh all things in us and for us, that worketh in us both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure*; and it is the good Pleasure of God that we should live in all Righteousness.

They that come to receive this Faith at first, receive it from an inward Feeling, they have the Operation of the Word of God in them; so the Apostle reckons Faith, not because such a Man heareth, and such a Man believeth what such a Man preacheth, but *Faith is the operation of God*; you may hear me, and a Thousand preach, and you may die Unbelievers for all that, except you come to this, To know the Operation of God, and the Work of Faith in you. How doth my Heart close with this? how doth my Soul join with this? What Vertue and Power do I feel in my self? It may be others that preach feel the Power, but do I feel it? If not, I come but to a Noise and Sound: If People feel not their Hearts joining with the Word preached, there comes no Advantage to them, You read in

Scripture, That *the Word preached did not profit, because it was not mixt with Faith in them that heard it*: This is your Case, you come to Meetings, and you love to hear the Doctrine of Truth preached; I tell you, and I will speak plainly to you, unless you come to feel the Operation of the Word of Truth in your Hearts, you may hear the Gospel, and the Word of Life preached to you, but it will not profit you much.

How is it possible for a Man to have a Testimony against Drunkenness, and yet be Drunk; a Testimony against Uncleaness, and yet be Unclean? How can a Man hear such a Testimony and believe it, and yet commit the Sin? He heard it, but did not feel the Vertue of it within himself, and so he did not mortifie the Sin that he was inclinable to; but they that come to join with Truth, and *with meekness receive the ingrafted word*, they find the Power and Ability of it, they find how able it is to save their Souls, they find how it worketh, not only just when they hear it, but it goes along with them, and dwells with them, and they find the Vertue of it overshadowing their Souls, with the Dread and Terror of the Lord; not with the Words that a Man speaks, I do not trust to them, but here is the Power and the Fear of the Lord, which will preserve my Soul, and keep me in safety; this is that which will keep my Mind fixed upon him, and keep my Mind inward, that I do not gaze about me; so that every one may
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have an Infallible Testimony of what they have heard and known.

I have known the Doctrine of several Sects that have been among us, and the main thing that many have gone from one People to another about, is this, That they might know what such a Man holds forth more than such an one, and they think the Truth is more perspicuous among such a People than other People; if you examine the Matter, it is this, Who preached and proved his Doctrine best. Alas, if they did all concur together, and did preach as certain and infallible Doctrine as ever Christ and his Apostles preached, this will all do thee and me no good, unless we know the Power. You know there were Thousands that heard Christ Preach, as you now hear me, and there were some so taken with him, that they went away, and said, *Never Man spake like this Man*. But were they all Christians? did they partake of Life by him? No, some of them were ready to stone him.

Now bring this home and consider with your selves, whether you are not some of you in the same State; when you hear Truth preached, there is an assent and agreement with it in your Minds; but when a Command comes to be obeyed, and a Cross to be taken up, and Self-denial to be shewn, or some Encrease of Trade lies in the way, let Truth go where it will, you must follow your Interest; there wants somewhat to fix you in the Principle of Truth, which is able to san-

etifie you and perfect you, that you may be reconciled to God through Christ.

They that are resigned and given up to Truth, it is possible for them that they may be satisfied, they have an infallible Testimony *of the Spirit of Truth witnessing with their Spirit*, that such a thing is bad, and if they might get the whole World to do it, they will not. What is Profit and Pleasure to me? My Pleasure is at God's right Hand, and my Profit is to get Grace, and to *have an abundant Entrance into God's Everlasting Kingdom*. Those that have the true Knowledge of Christ, they have Profit and Advantage, Pleasure and Delight enough, which is hid from the World, and ever will be. They are for Profit and Pleasure which they may have with a good Conscience. Those Things which God affords them as Blessings in this World, they despise them not, but take them with Thanksgiving, and use them for his Glory: But if they cannot have Profit or Pleasure without sinning against the Lord and their own Consciences, take Profit and Pleasure that will.

They that come thus to close with Truth, they have an infallible Evidence within them; they do not conceive it is thus and thus, because such a Man saith it is so, but they have an infallible Evidence in themselves. This is the Mind of the Lord, God hath signified it by his Spirit, and sealed it upon my Spirit, and I cannot but know it.

What do you profess Infallibility? Else I would

would hold my Tongue; if I did not know what I assert infallibly, I would never Preach more; Truth may be many times concealed. A Man may have wronged and cheated his Neighbour, and he not know of it; this Man goes away and his Neighbour doth not reproach him; but when he comes to lie down in his Bed, he hath a Sting and a Reproach in his Conscience, I know I have done him harm. Whether this is not Infallible? Let me consult some learned Men, that I may know whether it was a Lie I told. I need not go to learned Men and Logicians, to know whether it was a Lie; I am infallible in this, I know certainly it was not a Lie, I have a certain Evidence, and if a Thousand Men tell me to the contrary, I will not believe them. If there be Infallibility here, is there not then Infallibility in the Word of Truth? Shall I question it, or doubt it, if I have an infallible Testimony of it?

Tho' Men have never so little Proficiency, if they have it upon sure Terms, and lasting Foundations, let a Thousand Men come with all their Logical Skill and Sophism, yet they can never remove a Man from the Witness in himself. The Remnant that God hath brought to this Foundation, they have a Certainty and Infallibility in their Obedience, they pay to the Will of God, and in the Comfort they have in their Obedience to the Law of God, *which he hath written in their Hearts.* Let what will come, they can never be removed;

moved; for this exceeds all the Precepts and Doctrines of Men, it is the Precept and Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles. Let People read them and endeavour to practice them; but here comes the Testimony, the Divine Power by which the Precept was given forth to them, and is now given forth again to thee and me, with as much Liveliness and Power. Let us perform them as did the Primitive Christians.

Here now Comfort comes to flow forth from a settled Foundation that shall never be moved. The Winds have come and blown upon Religion; let what Wind will blow, and can blow, God hath built his Church upon a Rock, and it will remain unmoveable against all Opposition; blessed are they that are founded thereupon. Hath God fixed and established us in our Society with one another, and with our Lord Jesus Christ? This is the Foundation that God hath placed it upon: We desire that all Men may come to the same Stability and Settlement, and never more to be tossed with the Winds of Doctrine, but be built upon Christ Jesus the Rock of Ages, the Rock of our Ages, the Rock of us and our Children. That God will carry us on in this Society, is the desire of our Souls, for our Selves, and all our Friends and Country-men. The way for you to be blessed and to have an Advantage for your Immortal Souls, by the Testimony that hath been raised up, is to have regard to the working of

the same Power that you may come to partake of the Benefit of those Gifts and Graces which God hath bestowed upon his Church.

His Prayer after Sermon.

Most blessed and glorious God and Father of Life, how wonderful art thou in thy Appearances to thy People in the Day of thy Power, in which thou hast stretched thine Arm, and hast gathered a Remnant of those that were scattered, and art yet gathering them and bringing them to thy self, those that have been driven away; and thou hast made known thy Power and Goodness in the Hearts of the Sons and Daughters of Men, that they might love thee. That thou mightest beget Love to thy self, thou hast made known thy Love to their Hearts; if thou hadst not loved us first, we had never loved thee: But thou hast been shedding abroad thy Love in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, to constrain us to love thee. Thy Love is manifested to all that are breathing after thee, and none do breathe after thee, but through the Life that thou givest to them; and those that were dead in Sins and Trespases, hast thou quickened, and we would send forth thy Praises and Thanksgivings for the great things thou hast done for us in Jesus Christ. All thy Works praise thee, and thy Saints bless thee. Holy Father of Life, increase and multiply those Graces and holy Desires which thou hast begun to work in us, and pluck up every Plant that thy right hand hath not planted. Let spiritual Sodom be burnt up, and all that are Corrupt; let those things that thou hast planted spring up to the Praise of thy Name, and the Salvation of the Souls which thou hast gathered. O powerful God of Life, let thy blessed Presence and living Fear be among us, that all thy Children may offer Praises, and the Sacrifices of humble Thanksgivings upon thy Holy Altar. Arise, O Lord, more and more in the greatness of thy

thy Power, and dispel the Clouds of Darkneſs that hath been upon the Sons and Daughters of Men, and raiſe up in every one of us more and more holy Deſires and Breathings after that Life that is Eternal. Thoſe that have been ſcattered, let them be now gathered, and let thoſe that have been driven away in a cloudy and dark Night, be brought to a glorious and bleſſed Day, wherein they may enjoy the Goſpel that brings Light to dark Souls, that Praises and Thankſgivings may be offered up in thy Houſe for thy Holy Preſence with us, that we may be fed there, when we are aſſembled together in thy Name, according to thy Promise. Continue to be in the miſt of us, that living Praises and Thankſgivings may be offered up to thee, through Jeſus Chriſt; for thou alone art Worthy, who art God over all, bleſſed for evermore, *Amen.*

Sermon II.

The Word of God a Chriſtian's LIFE.

*Preached in Grace-Church-Street, March 14.
1687.*

IT was the Doctrin of the great Maſter of the Chriſtian Religion, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, while he was preaching and publiſhing and making known the way of Salvation among the Sons and Daughters of Men; he then preached and declared, That it was not

Bread.

Bread only by which a Man lived, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God. Now the way and means of Man's Preservation in Life, in a living State, the Method and Course that the God of Heaven doth open to keep the Sons and Daughters of Men alive, is by this Word.: Every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God, hath a Ministration of Life in it; and, therefore, all that are desirous of the Enjoyment of the Immortal Life, and of the preserving and encreasing of it, they are diligently to wait to be made Partakers of this Divine Ministration. Outward Bread is for outward Preservation, but Man is made inward as well as outward, he hath a Soul as well as a Body. Now Christ, to signifie to us, what the inward Man is nourished and fed by, tells us, That Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God.

So now in this our Day, as well as in former Days, it hath pleased God to give unto a Remnant an experimental Knowledge of the Truth of this; that they have been quickned and made alive by the Word of God; that is, they have heard, and felt, and tasted of the Word of Life that was with the Father before the World began, that hath been divinely ministered to them, by the Mercy of God, through Jesus Christ; many that were dead in Sins and Trespases, he hath said unto them, Live. He hath given unto many an inward sense of their

their State, who sometimes had it not ; he hath brought many an one to feel Sin to be a Burden and an oppressing Load, who sometimes before have taken Pleasure and Delight in it. This a great change that is wrought in a Man's Mind, that he should come to be laden with that, burthened and oppressed by that, which was before his Pleasure and Delight; yet this great Change hath been wrought in many a Soul, by the Operation of the Word of God, of that inward Word, that inward Voice, when the Lord hath taken Men in hand himself.

There are many have taken Sinners in hand, and have gone about to convince them and convert them, but they were not able to do it; but when the Lord hath taken Men in hand himself, when his Creator hath undertaken to deal with him himself, then the Man cries out, *I am a Worm, and no Man*; then he cries out under the sense of the Judgment of God, then he cries out under the Indignation of the Lord, which he hath kindled by his Sins he cries out for Mercy, then he prays for Remission, then he wishes that he had never provoked the Lord ; for the Word that goes out of the Mouth of God, hath a mighty Force and Power upon the Spirit of a Man, so that he is converted and changed by it; as the Prophet said of old, *The Word of God is pure, converting the Soul.*

Now where any come to an experimental Knowledge of the Word of the Lord, of this inward

ward Voice, whereby God speaks to the
sons and Daughters of Men, they have re-
ceived thereby an infallible Feeling of their
own State and Condition; this is the first
Lesson learned by it. They come to have a
certain infallible Knowledge of their own
state, and they are sure that they cannot be
deceived; for it brings an Evidence with it
in their Consciences, so that whatsoever this
Word of Life signifieth to a Man, he hath
the Knowledge of the same thing evidencing
it in his own Conscience, as the Apostle saith,
*if our Hearts condemn us, God is greater than
our Hearts, and knoweth all things.* Now here
is a way found out for Men to obtain divine
Knowledge by a divine Means; for the Lord
speaks by his Spirit, and if Men come to
hearken to that Voice, unto that Speaking,
they perceive readily what it saith unto them:
The Lord tells People as well now as in
former Ages, what he hath against them,
and this every one in the Closet of their
own Hearts, come to understand. We read
in the Book of *Revelations*, what our Lord
Jesus Christ appointed *John* to write to the
Seven Churches in *Asia*, that he had *few*
things against some, and *many things* against
others.

Now that which is the design of our Meet-
ing when we are assembled together, is, That
we may know what the Mind and Judgment
of God is, concerning our selves: How shall
we know that, unless we ask him, and come
to

to wait upon him, and enquire at the Oracle of Counsel, that God hath appointed in the Bosom of every Man? For he signifies his Mind unto the Children of Men, by that Light and Grace which Jesus Christ hath planted in them, he hath *Enlightned every Man that cometh into the World*, with an undeceiving Light, and he hath *ministred of his Truth* and Grace to every Man; tho' the Man be bad and untrue, and in the Dark, and there be Darknes in him, yet *the Light shineth in Darknes*. The Man may be a false Man, yet there is true Knowledge in him; if this Man hearken to the Voice of Truth, when the God of Truth signifies what his Mind and Judgment is concerning him, and his present State.

So that there is an opportunity offered, and if a Man believe the Word of Truth, which is administred to his own Mind, he cannot say such a Man hath deceived him, for it is Truth it self which is signified to him which he believeth: For the Truth is the Object of his Faith, and he believeth it of himself; he believeth that while he remains wicked in his unrenewed State, he is out of the Covenant of God, and in the high Road to Destruction, if he doth not get out of it, and return to God, and mind his Duty: He believeth this, and he believeth the Truth: It hath been so with many, it hath been so with us all; this is the first kind of Faith and Belief that ever we receive; for when Truth signifieth to us our fallen State, our alienated State, when Truth signifies and

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and discovers to us the Partition Wall of Sin
and Iniquity which we have builded up,
whereby the Glory and Favour of God, was
hid from the Soul, we believed this to be true;
we would have been lookd upon as Heirs of
God's Kingdom, yet when we are come to hear-
en to the Truth, we find that we are Children of
the Devil and do his Works; shall a Man be-
lieve this after he hath been Forty Years a Pro-
fessor of Christianity? If a Man believe Truth,
there is no danger in believing it, tho' it be his
own Destruction that is threatned.

Now the great thing that I would have
chered into the Hearts of Men, is, That they
may believe the Truth for Truth's sake. If Men
will believe the Truth, they must believe many
things against themselves, which they are not
willing to believe; but saith Christ, *No Man*
can be my Scholar, my Disciple, but by denying
himself: I must deny my self, my Pretensions
to Christianity, my supposed Saintship and
Title to the Kingdom of God; now if I would
be convinced that I am a Wicked Man, a
Profane Man, one that doth not live as be-
comes the Gospel; I must believe Truth, the
Voice of Truth being of infallible Certainty;
it is signified Divinely, by the immortal Word
that cannot deceive us; this ought to be the
Reason why People should believe the Testi-
mony of it, tho' it be against themselves;
they that do so, presently come to find the
effects of it, for they were in their Sins and
Trespases before, and so are still; they were
before.

before in a kind of Liberty, in a kind of Ease and Indulgence of themselves, and still the Sins remains in them, and they remain in it; but they are now under a sense of Sorrow, under a Weight, under a Burden, under an Oppression, which signifies they are alive, and quickened; for (if you take an outward comparison) they remain not senseless and dead; now lay what Load you will upon a Dead Man, he will neither groan, nor grumble at it; but if he comes again to life, he cries take off the Burden, the Weight and Oppression that lies heavy upon me.

This is the difference between being dead in Sins and Trespasses, and being brought to Life and Sense again; this Word of Life that comes from the Mouth of God, begets a Sense in every one that receiveth it; it is of great service and use to all People to be acquainted with it, that desire to be *Heirs of Life Eternal*, that desire to be *Inheritors of the Kingdom of God*. But how should they come by it? They think by this Duty, and the other Duty, and this and the other Temporary Performance, to obtain it; no, but if they will have Life, they must have it from the God of Life, that created them, he must Create them again to good works. They can have it but by one way, all must be brought to it that way; it cannot be by hearing a Man preach; unless the Spirit doth co-operate with the Word of God, there is no possibility of being quickened, and necessarily binds me to hearken and have regard to that

the Means: Now I say to you, faith Christ, speaking of Peoples way of living to Eternity, *Man liveth not by Bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God;* Now when we come to understand this Text, spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, we did conclude there was a possibility of understanding and hearing that inward Voice and Word of Truth in our own Hearts, that God did speak to us by his Son, Jesus Christ, who enlightened us. Hereupon Meetings were appointed at first, that the Word should minister Life in them, and Life to them that attend them; and to this Day our Meetings are appointed for this purpose, that we may have the Ministration of Life and Vertue, from Christ, the Fountain of Life and Vertue, by whom we were to be quickened and strengthened, and by whom *those that are dead in Sins and Trespases were quickened.*

Therefore, I would have every one always have a Reverence to the Word of Life, that speaks in themselves: for, if we speak we are *moved by the Spirit of God*, and utter those things by Verbal Testimony, which God hath made known to us; if you have not an Oracle in your Bosoms, if you do not the same time perceive an Eccho of Truth in your own Souls, this will do you no good, it be an empty Sound which will pass away again; but the Mind that is serious and settled, in waiting upon God with an earnest desire, that it may receive Benefit in going to

to this and the other Meeting; such an one will say, I pray God bless this Opportunity to me, that so I may receive Benefit to my Soul. Where People meet in this manner they have not only an Administration of Doctrine from without, from this and the other Instrument, but *they have a Ministration of the Word of God in themselves, by which a Man liveth.*

Let us not be led and hurried away with the grand Error of the Times, the great Error of this Age, and of the Ages by-past, that there is no possibility for People to understand and hear this Voice of God, this inward Voice. There are (say they) no immediate Teachings now a-days, no Inspirations now a-days; they had as well said, that there are no Conversions now a-days. I will prove from the Holy Scriptures, that there is no Man in this Age, is like to be converted to God, or redeemed from his Iniquity, and brought to the Knowledge of his Maker, unless he have it by the inward Working of the Eternal God: Not by Man's Preaching and Instruction, nor by reading all the good Sermons that ever were preached, without the Co-operation of the holy sanctifying Spirit which begets Life in them that believe; and if these Men say none can be Converted, then we must all go Headlong to Hell, and they and all.

These Quakers may say what they will, there is no immediate Teaching now a-days

Man can know the Mind of God, nor understand the Scriptures, none can open them to you.

But blessed be God this Darkness is removed, this Vail is gone over and taken away; the Brightness of the Glory of the Gospel hath expell'd this Darkness, and thousands now a-days do not only hear the Minister reprove them, but they hear a Voice within that doth reprove them for Iniquity, and they find and feel a Judgment and Tribunal within themselves, and that God hath an immediate way of counselling and instructing them they will hearken to him.

You that are under any sense of this, that you come to such an inward sense of the Operation of the Word of God, if you have heard it reprove you, exhort you, judge you and condemn you, consider that this *Word* proceeded out of the *Mouth of God*, and not out of the Mouth of any Man. You hear the Sentence of God upon you in your own Consciences: Whence comes it? This is out of the Mouth of God. Every Word that comes out of the Mouth of God, administers Life, Sense and Conviction; and you feel it and receive it, and you may have more familiar Acquaintance with it. There is not a Day or Hour that passes over your Head, nor mine, but if we attend to this inward Voice, we may know what it speaks to us, by its Counsels, Doctrines, Reproofs, Convictions and Illuminations; *for the Spirit speaketh expressly,*

pressly, with an exprefs Signification, unto the Spirit of Man; and if he be under a Temptation to tell a Lie, and he comes to a little Pause or Question, whether he shall tell it or no; if he hearken to this inward Word he will not pause long about it, but such a Sentence will arise in him, as that to *Joseph, How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* How can I speak a Lie, tell a Lie, when in so doing I sin against God? Here is a Sentence of Truth, wilt thou receive it or no? No, saist thou, I will venture to tell a Lie; then shalt thou come into the Rank of them that do *Despite to the Spirit of Grace, and trample under Foot the Son of God, and count the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing.* What Sentence such shall have at the latter end, you may read at large in the Holy Scriptures.

Now there is a great necessity that every one be perswaded to hearken to this Voice, not only at a Meeting, but on all Occasions they have in the World. I hope I speak to many serious and religious Persons that are enquiring about their Immortal Souls, what may be best for their Souls, whether 'tis better to on go in Wickedness, or leave off; and that resolve and say, I would be glad to leave my Sins as well as you, if I had Power and to live a Holy Life. As for the want of Power, that you have not Power, I do not wonder at it; for 'till you come to an exercise of Faith, in that which hath empowered the People of God, in all Ages, I wonder

not that you have not Power. You say I am so weak, that I am overcome before I am aware; the Devil is so subtil and cunning with his Temptations, that I am surprized and snatch'd into Temptations, and overcome with Evil before I am aware: He is *like a roaring Lion, going about continually seeking whom he may devour.* But who can he devour? Can he devour those that hearken and submit to the Word of God? If he could, then none could escape him; if the Devil could pluck out of God's hands, then no Body would go to Heaven, nor never shall, if he have Power.

Where the Devil finds any in their own hands, as suppose a religious Person of this and the other Religion, who never experienced any thing of this Power of God, but trusteth to his Duties and Performances, his Man is at his own Hand; now such an one the Tempter hath Power over: He can make him cheat his Neighbour, and lead him to Drunkenness and Uncleaness sometimes, and into the greatest Abominations; but if a Man come into the Exercise of Faith and Dependance upon God, and hath left trusting in his Hands, and saith, I see I cannot preserve my self from Sin, I see a necessity of putting my trust in the Lord, and waiting upon God's Power to keep me: If the Tempter come to such an one, he cannot prevail, all the Devils in Hell cannot stir him one jot; the Devil may Tempt him, but he stands in the Power of Faith; he knows his

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Name,

Name, and faith, *Get thee behind me Satan*; when the Devil comes before him, and lays a Temptation before him, he casts it behind him; if the Devil rise up against him, he can chain him down, he can say in the Name of the Lord, *Get thee behind me Satan*.

This is the Reason why many are tempted, and not overtaken; why many are tempted to sin and not overcome: How comes it to pass that we do not do every thing that we are Tempted to? There is something that keeps us; the Devil is not so bad to Tempt, but we are as bad in our own Inclinations to yield to him; *The Heart is deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* There is more Wickedness in it, than can be uttered. If People be tempted and not overcome, something must preserve them; if there be something that preserves a Man from any Evil, it can preserve him from all Evil.

The Reason why some People are led into Temptation sometimes, and resist it, is, because sometimes the Temptation suits not their Inclination; sometimes the Reputation lies in the way, sometimes one thing, sometimes another: But when a thing they are tempted to, suits their Profit and Pleasure, then away with the Fear of God, and nothing shall hinder them, I will have my Pleasure.

But they that understand the *Keeper of the Heart*, and come to know his Power lying in their Hearts, these always bring their Deeds

and Temper before him, and they come to him for a Verdict and Judgment, and they ask, Doth this tend to the Honour or Dishonour of God? Is it Good or Evil? The Oracle of God in the Heart says do it not, it is Evil, Thou wilt kindle the Indignation of the Lord against thee; what will it profit thee to gain the whole world and lose thy own Soul? or what wilt thou give in exchange for thy Soul? Here is one at hand that can give Counsel to all of us, at all times; this is he that we must advance, our Labour and Work upon the Stage of this World, among the Sons and Daughters of Men, is to advance the Vertue and great Authority of the mighty Councillor, Christ Jesus; we do say and affirm, in the Name of God, That the same Light and God by which God hath brought us out of Darknes into his marvellous light, and from the Power of the Devil into the Kingdom of his dear Son; the same Power is extended to you, that you may be sanctified and saved from your Sins.

One Sect will say, My Tenets are so and so, and our Ordinances are so and so, will you come over to us? You shall be a Member of our Church.

Our Duty is to come over to the Grace of God that shines in our Hearts; now we are Witnesses for God, That he doth not desire the death of them that die, but rather that they would turn and live; for his Word is gone forth, and his Light shines, and his Glory is risen upon the Nations, that they that inhabit the Earth

may fear him. Fear God, and give Glory to God. *The hour of his Judgment is come*: Do you know that to be true? That you may not be deluded, you shall certainly know that the Hour of God's Judgment is come.

Thus when any one suffers himself to be led away with the Evil One, when he feels after that a Remorse upon his own Heart, he finds a secret Judgment and Tribunal set up in his own Bosome, against Whoredom, Lying, Drunkenness, Fraud and other Sins, he knows he hath done amiss; he is not going to a Confessor, that will take off and remove the Guilt from his Conscience; he hath offended the Majesty of the great God, and God hath signified to him, Is not Judgment come, and hath not God set it up in his own Heart? If through Custom in Sin thou lovest the Sense of his Judgment, it is not because God hath determined to take advantage against thee, but because thou actest against thy self, and comest to be *past feeling*; thou wast once under a sense of these things, and thou wast not *past feeling*; if thou at any time told thy Parents a Lie, thou hadst Remorse; but now thou canst tell a Lie, and not feel it, thou art *past feeling*, whose fault is this? The Lord would have brought thee to love the Truth, but thou chusest Lying; if thou perish, *thy Blood will be upon thine own head*, the Lord is clear from it.

They that receive the Word of God have Life: *For man liveth not by bread only, but by every*

every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God: You are sensible of God's speaking this Word to you; I exhort you all in the Love of God, that you would prize this manner of Speaking, and look upon it as the greatest Mercy that ever you enjoy'd, that God hath not given over speaking to you, and that Conscience hath not given over speaking to you; and that the Spirit of the Lord doth yet *strive with you, he will not always strive*; you may be of that sort of Fools before you die, that *make a mock of Sin, and be as Trees twice dead, and plucked up by the Roots*. You that are sensible of this inward Voice, prize it above all your Mercies; Health and Wealth, and all other Mercies, are not worthy to be compared to this Voice of God speaking in you: they that prize this, will never complain for want of Power; they will find Power in it, all the Power in Heaven and Earth is contained in this Truth that shines unto you; They that come to be exercised in this Word, receive Power from God, for God gives it to them; he gives them Power by degrees, from being Sons of *Belial*, Sons of the Devil, to become *Sons of God, to as many as believe in his name*. They that receive this Truth grow tender of a Lie, of a vain Word, they find themselves grow tender, feeling and sensible: Here is a token that the God of Life is quickning them; I am now tender of speaking a Lie to my Neighbour; I will not do that thing to another that I would not have another

ther do to me; when you come to a tender State, which is far better than an hard-hearted State, you will have an Evidence in yourselves, That *man liveth not by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*

Blessed are they that God hath brought into Acquaintance with his Word; of all Nations and People upon the Earth, they are a blessed People; though there are manifold Blessings that reach indifferently to all, *The Sun shines, and the Rain falls on the evil and the good, and on the just and unjust*; yet this is a Blessing that can only make the Soul happy, that an Intercourse between it and its Maker is open; that there is an open Intercourse for the Lord to hear a Man cry, and he to receive his Word, all those that God hath brought into Covenant with himself by Christ, he hath made sensible of this Intercourse and way of God's speaking to his People, which he spake to them by in former days: Take heed that this way is not stopt up; you know by what it was opened, and what will stop it up again; when you were in much trouble and Grief, you cried to the Lord, and he delived you: But if I *regard Iniquity in my Heart*, said David, *the Lord will not hear me*: You cried to the Lord again, it may be, and he did not answer you; and the Lord cried to you and you answered him not, but hearkened to your Lusts.

Yet the Lord by his *Long-suffering and Patience* hath won upon a Remnant, and hath brought

brought them over to believe and trust in his Power, to remove out of the way that which hindered the Intercourse between God and their Souls. What a great Stir was there in removing out of the way the Pride, Corruption, Enmity, Loosness, Wantonness, and abundance more of Evil things, that made the Soul like a Wilderness? What hacking up and burning up was there? God's Word, *like a hammer*, and *like a fire*, did break up and burn up these things; and the same Word of God, like a Sword, did cut down those Sins and Lusts which prevailed over you before: By this means God hath opened a Way for you, to have access to him, and for his Word to have access to you: When you come to the Lord in this way, you know you live by this Word, and if you hear the Word of the Lord spoken immediately to you, your Joy and Consolation increaseth, and you have sweet Communion and Fellowship with God and Christ, and with one another, by this Covenant of Life. How came you into it? It was by removing a great deal of Rubbish out of the way. If you should let this Rubbish grow up again, which kept you from the Joy of the Holy Ghost, will it not do it again? If your Pride, Corruption, Enmity, Prejudice, Loosness and Wantonness, if these be suffer'd to grow up in any of you, they will do as they did before, they will separate you from the Lord and from one another: As the Truth brought you to God and this heavenly Fellowship

ship with him, so if a wrathful Mind and wanton Spirit get up again, it will separate you from God, and scatter you from one another, then you will live in the outward Life, and die to the inward one and perish: Remember you were told so.

Every one that goes from this living Word, and suffers any thing to arise of the old Nature, so much as that riseth, so much will your way of Intercourse with God be stopt; sometimes Men cry to God, but they have a Bar in their way; and they come for Comfort to the Throne of Grace, but they cannot receive those Ministrations of Joy and Peace, which they desire; *their foolish hearts are darkned, and their minds blinded,* and they will go on in Darkness, and be left out of the Holy Covenant which God hath called his People to.

You that God hath engaged to be his, by the Operation of his Power, O live in a holy Fear and Watchfulness; and know this, That let your Understandings and Gifts be what they will, you have nothing but what is given you, and what God hath given you, he can take away: *Thou hast decked thy self with my flax, and my wool, and with my silver and gold, and other ornaments, and followed thy lovers, therefore will I take them away from thee, and strip thee of all thou gloriest in:* Those that forget God, of whom they had these things, that forget their Brokenness of Heart, and the Subjection of their Spirits to God; if they forget this, let them know, that let their Parts

be what they will, they will certainly wither, and their inward Life will fail; you that have regard to your own Souls, and do desire heartily (at this Time) to be quickned, and find that the Lord hath removed your Deadness, and quickned and raised you to such a degree and measure of Life, that you can say, I find Communion with God, and Fellowship with my Friends and Brethren in that one Eternal Life, I pray God you may continue in it long, and lay down you Heads in this blessed heavenly Life. Now that you may so do, keep your selves low and humble, and in the Fear of God, and keep your Ears always open to his Word, and live as becomes those *that are born again* and begotten of God, and are brought to partake of the Divine Life. Let Temptations surround you, that Life will preserve you; he that never sinn'd is with you, to keep you from Sin; and he that never deceived any, will keep you from being deceived: To his Counsel and Conduct, and to his Divine Care and Protection, I now commit you.

Sermon III.

The Necessity of an Holy Life and Conversation.

*Preached at St. Martin's-Le-Grand, March
the 26th, 1687.*

O How happy are they that have Bread in their own Houses ! and that can draw Water out of their own Wells ! These have a blessed glorious Dwelling-Place, these are the Children that their Father provides for : All the Divine Treasures and the Riches of Heavenly Things are laid up for these ; O that all that have a Sight of this blessed State, were got into it ! that their Minds might not more wander, that People might not be scattered in their Thoughts, that when they meet together, they might have their Expectations entirely from that God whom they profess to worship : *Lord thou hast said that thou wilt teach thy People thy self ;* here a Cry goes up to the Lord, ad their Expectations through Faith pitched upon God ; they never meet in vain, but *a well springs up, and the water of life comes to them, by which they meet with Divine Refreshments ;* for, you know, the Promise

Promise that our Lord made to his Disciples,
*He that drinketh of the water that I shall give
him, shall never thirst more.* Why, will once
Drinking serve? Because I have tasted of the
Living Water that the Lord Christ gives me;
will that serve? No, but he giveth me a
Substantial River, that is the reason why I
shall thirst no more, it shall be in me a *well
of living water, springing up to everlasting life;*
blessed are the Witnesses of it; these are they
that are satisfied concerning Religion and Do-
ctrine, they are satisfied concerning Worship,
they are looking after no new things; when
they meet together, they meet in the Name of
the Lord, and they have their Eyes to him,
who is a Fountain, and they discern a Bright-
ness and a Glory that is unspeakable; and the
Glory that is speakable, that appears many
times through Instruments, will not satisfy
them; there is something beyond that, which
must satisfy; this will never do it: People
will never be satisfied with hearing, nor ne-
ver satisfied with seeing, 'till they come to
hear and see *that which is unutterable,* and then
they are satisfied; Christ had preached ma-
ny Sermons in the hearing of his Disciples,
and there were a great many said, *That there
was never any man spake like him, preached like
him;* yet one of them that was nearest to
him, and most acquainted and intimate with
him, after some Years meeting and hearing of
his Sermons, he cries out, *Shew us the Father and
he sufficeth us.*

My Friends, this comes near to many of your States; many of you have heard long, and have heard the speakable Word of God, that which could be uttered, that which could be spoken forth, by the Demonstration of the Holy Ghost, by them *that have received it of the Father*; this you have heard long, and yet there are many of you, that if you come to a serious Search, you will find a Want, you will find still that you have not that Satisfaction that puts you beyond Doubt, beyond Fear; there is some thing that stands in the way, that hinders your Enjoyment of the unspeakable Glory of the unspeakable Word, and this will never be removed, but by your innocent submitting to the Work of the Power of God in your own Hearts, that so you may not only be Believers, but come to be really baptized, and then all is out of doubt; for our Lord said, *he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*; he doth not say, He may be saved, but, He shall be saved.

Woful Experience hath told us in our Days, That a great many have believed the Truth, and yet they are never like to be saved, they *have made shipwreck of their Faith*; but if they had been baptized, if they would have endured the Baptism, if they would have been buried with Christ in Baptism, they should have been saved, every one of them; and now there are a great many that remain in the Belief of the Truth, and yet they are not Baptized, they are not Dead, not Buried, not-

notwithstanding they have received like precious faith with us, that faith which is of the operation of God, and that is like precious in its nature to all that do receive it, and would work the same effect in all too, if it were not obstructed ; but notwithstanding they have received Faith towards the saving of their Souls, yet their Souls are Captives, their Souls are subject to Lusts, and Pleasures, and Vanities, and unto empty and foolish Things, and to Passions and Corruptions, after they have received Faith.

For if you take one that is a Believer of Truth, that is overtaken with his Lust, and Passions, and Corruptions, he will commonly own that he believeth the contrary, he believeth that these things should not be, that it ought to be otherwise: This is the signification of Truth against Untruth ; If it should be otherwise, why is it thus then ? Why, he finds a Life to spring up in that which is corruptible, that is always contrary to the Life of God, and at Enmity with it : What shall I do ? I believe the Truth, I know it is an holy Thing, it leads all that submits to it to an holy Life, and there is this and that unholy Thing, this and that corrupt Thing remains, what shall I do ?

It is an evident Demonstration that thou wantest the Baptism of him in whom thou believest ; thou hast believed in Christ Jesus that cometh after John, and was before him ; and now having believed in him, thou wantest to be

be baptized by him, and for want of that, the Pollution and Corruption that was grow up in thy nature, in the time of thy Alienation, prevails still upon thee, contrary to thy Faith; and there is no coming to obtain this Baptism, but by sinking down into that which will slay thee, that which will kill thee: But there is such a shifting to save ones Life, there are so many twistings and twinings of People to save their Lives, that at last they lose them; but there are none that could ever find that Life that is Eternal, but those that are willing to be given up to the Dead, and submit to this Baptism, that is, by the Holy Ghost and by Fire: These only do come to Life, they come to the Resurrection, for you never knew any that died this Death but they rose again; it is as impossible for Death to hold any one down that is buried in this Baptism, as it was impossible to hold Christ down, when he was in the Grave; *The same power that brought again our Lord Christ from the dead, the same power it is that quickens us, while we remain in these mortal Bodies, after we have sustain'd this Death and Crucifixion.*

But who can believe this Saying? for *this is a hard saying, who can bear it?* Is it not enough that I am a Believer, which makes me a Friend, and entitles me to a Community among you, and as long as I hold the Truth, and profess the Truth, I am looked upon as one of your Society? This is very true, this doth

both entitle People unto the outward Privileges of the Church of Christ; but there is another inner Court, that lies under the Angel's Reed, the Measuring-Reed, that is to be measured, the Temple is measured, and every Worshipper in the Temple is measured; there was an outward Court, that was for representing the Church of God in general, from the particular; the outward Court was not measured, that the Gentiles might come in; the unbaptized People, which were never regenerated, they might come so far as the outward Court, but this did not entitle them to the Privileges of the House of God, nor to any Worship or Sacrifice that was accepted upon God's Altar.

It concerns you and me (my Friends) to be serious about Matters of this Moment and Importance, and not spend your Days, and, as it were speak by rote, under an airy Profession, though of Truth it self, without considering what Progress you have made, what Benefit you have obtained, and whether you are come not only to the Shadow of good things to come, but to the very Substance of the heavenly things; for the comers to the outward worship could never with those Sacrifices they offer'd be made perfect; the comers thereunto were not made perfect as to the things pertaining to the conscience, speaking there of the outward Worship, Heb. 10. 1. but coming to the heavenly things, whereof the other were but a Shadow, they made People perfect, as to the Conscience,

ence and did bring them to Salvation. The Apostle alludes to this Baptism, for he speaks in a Figure of the *Eight Persons that were saved in Noah's Ark*; then he brings down the Allegory to Christian Baptism, not only the Baptism of John, the Fore-runner of Christ, that preached of Christ, but to the Christian Baptism it self; *By the like figure whereof baptism now saveth us*, saith the Apostle, *not the putting away of the filth of the Flesh, but the answer of a good Conscience*. What doth he mean by Baptism saving us? He means, *the answer of a good Conscience towards God, through the resurrection of Christ from the dead*; so that Christian Baptism did bring along with it the cleansing and putting away of all sin out of the Conscience that might bring them under Doubts and Scruples; and then there is an arising of Jesus, the Saviour, in the Conscience, the Mediator that brought them to answer for them in the Sight of God; for if People be conscious of Sin, and do leave off their Sin, this doth not yet cleanse the Conscience; for there still remains a Conscience of Sin; 'tis not the leaving off our Sin that makes our Attonement with God, or that expiates our Guilt, or doth away the Guilt of the Sins that we have committed; but there must be a forsaking and a leaving off Sin by the Vertue and Power of the Spirit, by which we are enabled, not only to leave off Sin, but are guided and directed to the Mediator, whose blood alone reconcileth us to God, and cleanseth

us from all Sin. If I should never commit a Sin, while I live, it is not this simply in it felt that will make me have the answer of a good Conscience in the sight of God; for there remains the Guilt of Sin contracted in the Days of Unbelief, which is a Bar and Hindrance that none can approach the Holy God but in the Attonement and Salvation that comes by Jesus Christ; for all that believe and obey the Gospel are accepted in Christ, and upon the account of Christ's precious Blood, that cleanseth us from all Sin and Unrighteousness. Whom doth it cleanse? Those only that forsake their Sins, and by his Power are brought to a holy Life; they by the Vertue of his Power, and the Cleansing of his Blood, come to have their former Sins removed from them, as far as the East is from the West.

But what is this to them that remain in their Sins? what is this to *them that are not baptized?* for the dead, that have not put off the old Man, nor put on the new Man, but have only put on the Name and Profession of Christ, and put on the outside of him, his Garment, but have not put him on, they are not *Created again in Christ Jesus unto goodworks, that they might walk in them?* No wonder there remains a conscience of Sin in them, there is a Bar that hinders them from the sight of the Glory of God, and from real and true Satisfaction, concerning their Attonement and Reconciliation with God and this hinders them from the Enjoyment of *that Peace that passeth understanding;* and it is no wonder, because they are not come
to

to this Baptism that brings the *answer of a good Conscience in the sight of God*; they are not risen with Christ; how should they? for they are not buried with him, *Rom. 6. 3. Know ye not that so many us (saith the Apostle) as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into his death; therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*; here is a change figured out between them that had partaken of the spiritual Baptism, and were come again to the Participation of Life in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ; and those that were not baptized.

So it is now with every one that cometh to believe the Truth, and make a Profession of it; there is a way cast up, and there is a door opened for Salvation; but the grand Question that every one ought to enquire about, and put to themselves, is, *What Progress they have made in this way? Whether they are Baptized yet or no? Whether they have Put off the old Man with his deeds, and put on the new Man and the new Man's deeds, which are righteousness and holiness?* They that find that, though they are Believers, they are short of this, they do also find that their Shortness is their hinderance, their Shortness in not coming up to the Pattern that hath been shewed them, is their Hinderance, so that they enjoy not the things here spoken of; the being under this sense, and really sitting under this sense in a Meeting, though

though there should be no Man speaking to them outwardly, yet being come to this Faith, and made Partakers of this Baptism, People would find in their own Bosoms the hidden Word of Life ministring to their Condition; they would have enough, there would not be a Famine of the Word unto them, nor they should not need to be in expectation of going out to this or the other Instrument, but they would be satisfied when they are met together with the Presence of the Lord, that the Lord is in the midst of them, ministring them the Word of Life, in his operating and working, speaking in a Tongue that every one can understand it, speaking with a kind of Voice and Language, that every one may understand his own State and Condition; and this is the way that God brought up People from the Beginning, to the Knowledge of Heavenly Things, and opening of the Mysteries of Salvation; we had it not of Men, but of Jesus our Lord; he was our great Minister, we waited upon him, and trusted in him, and he taught us himself; he hath ministred to us at our silent and quiet waiting upon him those things that were convenient for us; we might well say, *He gave us our food in due season*; he hath not only given *strong Meat unto Men*, but hath ministred of the *sincere Milk of his word unto Babes*, that lived in Sincerity and Self-denial, loving God above all things; and he taught and conducted us in our Way, this Way of Simplicity, until our Understandings came to be opened, until our Souls came

came to be prepared to receive the mysteries of his Kingdom.

In those Days there were some that started up in Knowledge, and that *built their Nests on high, and took Flax and Wool, and Silver and Gold, and decked themselves with them;* but the Lord found them out, and brought them down, and took the Crown from their Head, and cloathed them with Dishonour: So God doth from Age to Age, his Judgments will begin at his own House; if you would *Grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,* then grow in humility and self-denial, and keep a constant watch upon your Hearts; examine your Hearts, and *Commune with your selves upon your Beds, and be still;* take heed lest you sin against the Lord, and provoke him: *There were some that provoked the Lord of old, and they committed two great evils: What be they? They have gone away, and forsaken the Fountain of living Water;* as much as to say, they have not their dependance upon an invisible Power, as they ought to have; for I am a living Fountain, and 'tis by an invisible Power that I am able to counsel, and teach, direct, and purify and open their understanding; but they have forsaken me, that is one great evil; and the other is, they would not be without somewhat, *they have forsaken the Lord,* and they would have somewhat instead of God; *They have digged to themselves broken Cisterns, that will hold no Water.* And how many in this Age have committed these two great Evils?

My Friends, examine your selves ; are there not many that have been guilty of these two great Evils? They do not keep their close dependence, trust and reliance upon the invisible power of God, as they profess they ought to do, but are hurried away from it; some by the love of the World, some by Lusts and Pleasures, some by Passions, and others by worldly Interests, are drawn away from the Power, to do and say that which the Power is against: Is not this a forsaking of the Lord the living Fountain? What do they do then? Are they not for this and that, and the other Man? for hearing this and the other Mans word, and *digging to themselves broken Cisterns*? And have they not their trust and confidence in going to Meetings, in commending this and the other way? Have they not their trust in their Profession outwardly, when it ministers nothing to their Souls, so that they secretly wither for all this? If you had all the Men and Angels that were ever sent of God, appointed to preach to you, that could not minister Life to you, unless there be that Faith that stands in the Power of God. The Faith that stands in any Mans Words, that will not overcome your Lusts; but the Faith that stands in the Power *purifies the Heart*, it will not suffer any unclean thing there. As for Preaching, let a Man preach against this and the other Lust and Corruption, there it will remain for all his Preaching, unless Men know Gods Power and Life in which

which there is Righteousness; for Words and Knowledge, and Sight and Speculation, will never give People Victory over their Sins.

Therefore you know, every one who is settled must be settled where the Foundation of Religion is; it is not coming to Meetings, and owning this and the other Doctrine which is the Foundation of our Religion; God hath revealed his Power to every one of us; God hath not given his Spirit to Preachers and Prophets only, for then there would be a *Famine of the Word*, as was in *Israel*, *The Priests Lips preserved Knowledge*. If you did take away the Priest, you did take away the Knowledge. The Prophets had the Word of God, and they only spake the Word of God. If the Prophet was taken away, then the Word of God was taken away. The Lord threatned to send a Famine among them, they grieved and vexed, and killed and destroyed the Priests and Prophets; therefore, saith the Lord, *I will send a Famine among you, not of Bread, but of the Word, and they shall go from City to City, and enquire for the Word of the Lord*.

Thus it was in the Jewish Church; if there was a Prophet they would go 30, 40, or 100 Miles to him that had the Word of the Lord; *They shall go from City to City, to enquire for the Word of the Lord*: But blessed be God we are come to another Day, for now the Word of the Lord is manifested in the Hearts of all that believe; they know the

Word:

Word: I do not say all that believe do preach the Word, or ought to preach; but the Word preacheth to them; they are not as *broken Cisterns that can hold no Water*; when they find the Word and hear it, they speak it presently; what is ministred to their own Condition, that they tell to other Folks; when People come to the Blessing of this Dispensation that God's Word revealeth in their Hearts, they then know what the signification of it is, they understand the Doctrin of it, the Doctrin preacheth Holiness to them; not that they should preach Holiness and yet remain Unholy; not that they should preach Humility, and yet remain Proud: It preacheth Holiness, Humility and Singleness of Heart to a Remnant, that like good Scholars and Disciples learn the Lessons and Doctrin of the Word of God.

Now when thou hast learned them well, and art come to see the effect of the Word, and dost bring forth the Deeds and Works which are the Fruits of Holiness, *Perfecting Holiness in the fear of God, and with Humility known and witnessed in Christ Jesus*, and art not only meek in shew, but *meek and low in Heart*; when People come to be meek and lowly, and of a clear Conscience, *purged from all dead Works to serve the living God*; then if the Lord gives them a Word of Exhortation, of Doctrin or Counsel, it is very welcome, and it hath a Savour through the Blessing of God, and they come by it to be

built

built up in their most holy Faith, and this Word is brought forth in Holiness and Righteousness in their Lives, and shews it self in a Life of Holiness; then thou wilt shine in thy Conversation to all that thou conversest with, so that they may see thee to be such a Man or Woman as hast been with Jesus, and learned of Jesus, and receivedst *a word ingrafted*; when thou dost receive the Word into thy Heart, there is the engrafting of it: If it hath not Root there, then, saith Christ, *My Word doth not abide in you.* If you feel something of this Invisible Word in your hearts, it brings you to a Resolution to serve God, and to keep your selves from sin, and to answer the Profession which you make of God; this is the effect of the Word of God, if it doth abide in you. Doth it abide? You shall know anon or to morrow, so soon as a Temptation comes to stir you up to Pride or Passion, to Fraud or Deceit, then you will see whether the Word abide: If it abide, you sin not.

This is Scripture, a certain Foundation Doctrine, that may be as safely preached as any Doctrine: If the Word abide in you, you sin not; What of that? Let the Word go, and you will sin, when ever you are tempted to it. *I write to you young Men, because you have overcome the wicked one, you are strong, and the Word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.* We shall see as soon as a Temptation meets with thee,

thee, whether the Word abides in thee; if it abide, thou wilt not Sin, but resist the Tempter. Set thy Foot upon the Temptation, and go over it, and thou wilt have the Dominion; and this will make thee a Free-man or Woman, and thou wilt *stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made thee free*. The Apostle supposeth them free, and that they have got Dominion; then *Stand fast*, saith he, *in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made thee free*. It is a liberty not of Lust and Sin, but a liberty of the Soul; the Soul now is at the Devil's Will and Call.

For it is a shame to the Doctrine of Christianity, that we profess things, and yet deny them in Practice: We profess that there is a Power in Christ to keep and preserve us out of sin, and we profess to believe this Power is communicated to them that do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for their Preservation; that is, he will not withhold it from them: We profess these things in the face of the whole World; and yet when the Devil calls one Man to Covetousness, and another to defraud his Neighbour, and another to defile himself, he is drawn away thereby; what Hypocrisie is here to profess this, and act the contrary? I do not wonder that they that profess they cannot live a day without Sin, that they should fall; but they that profess to believe there is Power enough in Christ, and that it is offered to them, for them to live in sin and yield to temptation, this

is horrid Wickedness. They that are of an upright single Mind, would die before they would sin, knowing that God is Almighty, and gracious, and willing to bestow his Power, and Wisdom, and Grace, upon them that ask it; they would die rather than sin against God presumptuously: Let it cost me my Goods, my Estate, my Liberty, or my Life, *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* They love God above all; you never heard them complain that they wanted Power, *For the Lord is at their right Hand, and they shall not be moved.* They cannot fall; tho' they are Tempted, they will not fall into Temptation. They have Power when they see the Devil before them, to put him behind them; the Nobility of their Extract, of their new Birth and Regeneration, puts such a Temper and Disposition into their Souls, that they scorn to be at the Devils Command, as if they were his Children.

Oh it is a noble and honourable thing to be a Child of God, a very high Dignity to be in such an honourable Relation to God, and to have a Right to the Heavenly Mansions, *To sit down in heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.* I would to God you were all ready for it, that you had the Wedding Garment on, that you might not be bound *Hand and Foot, and cast into utter Darkeness.* What is the reason that you do not sit down in this heavenly Frame and Temper, and draw the Waters

of Salvation out of your own Souls ; Could the Lord do any thing more than he hath done, and could his Servants do any more than they have done for your Help ? Are not their Labours demonstrations of it ? We have been *as Epistles of Christ written in your Consciences* : We have been testifying that there is something wanting in too too many, the want of resigning up themselves to the Baptism of the Cross. People are willing to be counted Friends ; but they are Friends of God, *that do whatsoever he commandeth 'em* ; that is the Christian Lesson, not to say, I will be a Friend to you, and a Friend to the Church, and to such a sort of People ; but I will be a Friend of God, and do whatsoever he commandeth me ; whatsoever Command God lays upon you, either to take up a Cross, or to deny your selves and follow him.

Learn this Lesson, and you will be Disciples indeed, and Members of the Church too ; not Members of a Church priviledged outwardly only, but *Members of a Church of the first-born, and you will have your Names written in Heaven* ; when one comes to have his Name written in Heaven, he comes to know his Name, 'tis a *white Stone*, not a speckled one ; they that have it, they know it, they are not ignorant of one another's Names, that are written in this Book ; they have a Fellowship that no body can declare ; their Communion is in that Bread and that Cup : This is a Cup of Blessing indeed, and this hath blessed

us, and will bless us : God will preserve a People in this Fellowship. You that are at a distance now, you must come nearer to him; God will chuse a People by whom his Name shall be magnified; because *the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts*, we cannot but desire this for all, *especially for the household of Faith*; we cannot but desire their Perfection, their growing up in the Grace of God, that they might come to be partakers of Heaven. And in the next Place, our Love is to all People, every where; we would be glad *that all were saved*; they that despise us, when we are speaking of Heavenly things, speaking like a Child, like a stammering Child, speaking of the glorious Excellencies of God, of the loving kindness of God, speaking of those things which God hath spoken to our Souls, they that despise these things, we would be glad that they might be saved: If they were partakers of these things, they would be glad as well as we, and they would be more really happy in respect of this World, for the Time that they are to live here; they would live a happier Life, even in this World, and they would *have everlasting life in the world to come*.

The love of Christ constrains men thus to judge, that every one that hath received like precious faith, ought to answer that Grace and Faith which God hath ministred to them in a holy Life and Conversation, and every one who is a stranger to this thing, ought to be
of

of an enquiring Mind and an open Heart to wait for the Day when God will visit them with the same Grace ; when you give up your selves to a daily Cross, as Christ's Disciples, you will not be running after any one to teach you to know the Lord, for you will all *know the Lord, from the least to the greatest* ; I that have been but a little convinc'd, shall I know the Lord ? Thou shalt know the Lord, thou that art *dead in thy sins and trespasses*, thou that hast not *known the Blood of cleansing*, thou shalt know *the Lord* to be thy Judge, and thy *Law-giver*, to teach thee how thou must live, walk and act ; and is not that a good knowledge ? This is the way they reckoned upon in old Time, it is a notable Expressi- on, *The Lord is our Judge* ; there is the begin- ning, he began there, Judgment began *at the house of God* ; those he brings into his House, he brings them under the Discipline of his House, *The Lord is our Judge, he is our King and Law-giver, and he will save us* ; this same Exercise of Discipline under Judgment brought to them the Faith and Experience of his being their Law-giver, and this brought them to a Faith of the last Sentence, we shall be saved ; and the Lord answers such a People, That he will bring salvation to them, *Salvation shall be for walls and bulwarks* : Did the People of this Nation but know Salvation was brought near to them, and that it was their Bulwark, there would not be a crying up this and the other rotten thing for a Bulwark.

We talk of a Bulwark as well as others; we have a Bulwark, blessed be the God of Heaven, made of better Stuff than theirs; for it is the Salvation of God which hath kept us from the Pollution of Sin, and from a running *into all excess and riot* that others have run into; it hath kept us from the Evil, it hath kept Evils out of us, and we have found that certainly true, That *all things work together for good, to them that love God, and fear God*; that all the Providences of God together, they have all wrought for our good; and this is the Bulwark that we have trusted in, and it hath served hitherto, and it will serve us and our Posterity to the end of the World: This is a Bulwark that will never be stormed, that will never be thrown down nor laid waste: Though all the Powers on Earth, and all the Potentates in this World should agree together, they shall not prevail against it; we have *Salvation for walls and bulwarks*; if I be within these Walls, Salvation is round about me; If I am got into this eternal Bulwark, I am safe from the Devil and his Instruments; here is a Bulwark to be relied upon.

Many wonder we differ with them in some Opinions; we have that Confidence in this Bulwark, that we desire not another; God will last and abide for ever, so will this Bulwark; all the care that I take, and all the care that you should take, is to keep within these Walls: Do not sally out, if you go out, the Devil is watching, and *seeking continually*
whom

whom he may devour ; he will catch Straglers ; if that People will go out for Profit, or for Pleasure, or Interest, the Devil will catch them : What, such People talk of Salvation for Walls and Bulwarks ? the Devil hath got them in his Snare, and they are caught in Drunkenness, Uncleanneſs and other Sins ; the reason is, they have gone out of their Bulwark, they have sallied out of their Walls, for the Devil could never have fetched them out.

O take heed, ſays the Apoſtle, leſt there ſpring up in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God ; as if he had ſaid, You are Chriſtians now, you are a People come to a good eſtate in Chriſt ; but conſider you have no ſtrength to ſtand but in him, no Power to keep your ſelves but in him ; Take heed at all times that there ſpring not up in you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God ; take heed leſt there ſpring up in you ſuch a Thought as this ; I may take this Pleaſure, and the other Profit ; Conſider that thou dieſt and withereſt if thou depart from the living God ; take heed of taking Liberty above the fear of God : It is not our talk of Salvation for Walls and Bulwarks, that will do us good, but our keeping within theſe Walls.

I remember a notable Saying of the Apoſtle, which hath a great Emphaſis in it, and a great deal of Doctrin, he writeth to the Church, after they were become a People of

professing Christians, *Take heed lest you come to be beguiled by the Serpent, as he beguiled Eve; he did not speak of Jezebel, a wicked Woman; but he spoke of Eve, a good Woman, created after the image of God, in righteousness and holiness; They were come to a Life of Sanctification, to a Life that was hidden from Ages and Generations; You must look to your selves, and look upon your selves as in the state of your Mother Eve, a Woman brought forth in Righteousness and Holiness, that might have stood in that Primitive state, notwithstanding all the Subtilty of all the Serpents in the World; but letting her Ear hearken to this Old Serpent, she was beguiled; there grew up a Consultation in her reasoning part; it may be so as he saith, I will try.*

So I say to you that are come to a state of Sanctification, and in some measure to know the cleansing Power of God, and that you have not believed in it in vain, but it hath effectually wrought some Change and Alteration in you, and is still carrying on the Work of your Salvation: many Temptations will attend you, and many Snares will be laid in your way, but God hath preserved you to this Day: I know the Devil's Wiles and Temptations are manifold; they are fitted to every one's Inclinations, fitted to every Opportunity, and to every occasion in this World; Men are tryed every way by the Tempter, to see which way he may ensnare them; he tries every way to *ensnare and entangle the simple,*

simple, that he may turn them to the right Hand or to the left, that their Souls may be destroyed and perish.

I cannot speak to you by a more emphatical word, by a more familiar Exhortation than this, *Take heed you be not beguiled as Eve was*: many will be tempted as she was, but I would not have you do as she did, and yield to the Temptation: Take heed that you do not defile your selves, but *keep your garments white*; you that have been washed and cleansed, labour to *keep your selves unspotted from the world*; *this is pure religion and undefiled*, that which hath enlightned many a Nation, and shall enlighten many of those whose Religion is to be undefiled, and to *keep themselves unspotted from the world*: I pray God increase the number of them, that so the blessed Work of Sanctification that hath begun in this way, may be carried on to his Praise, and the Salvation of our Souls, to the spreading forth of his Glory, and the exalting of his Name; that the Strangers which are scattered and desolate may be brought into his holy Way, and walk in it; that we all, in a Fellowship together, walking in that holy way, may through the Eternal Spirit offer Praise and Thanksgiving to God, who is worthy to receive Glory and Honour, Power and Dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Sermon IV.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper Asserted.

*Preached at Grace-Church-Street, April
the 15th, 1688.*

*If any Man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he
is none of his.*

IF I should say no more, there is that in every ones Conscience that will make Application; if he that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his, you may say, Whose is he then? If they be none of Christ's that have not his Spirit, whose are they? They are all his whose Spirit rules them, every one of us doth belong to him whose Spirit ruleth over us, unto whose Power we are subjected. You know this distinguisheth People in the World, One King knoweth his Subjects from another King's Subjects, they are under the Obedience of this, that, and the other King or Prince, his Law is over them, they are subject to it, so here is a Decision of all the People in the World, who they belong to.

We, all of us, I hope, do expect there will be a Decision at the Day of Judgment, and believe the things we read concerning that, That there will be a Decision, and some will be placed on the right-Hand, and some on the left-Hand; some will have the Sentence of *Come ye Blessed*, and others the Sentence of *Go ye Cursed*; but now there is a way of finding out the Decision of the Matter before we go out of the World, before the Day of Judgment, when there will be no Remedy, that is, then it must be and abide so; now there is no need it should continue so; if it be amiss, it may be mended; if I do not belong to the right Prince, if I be not under the right Power and Spirit, I may be, for now it is a day of Grace, a day of Mercy; I have been a Rebel to the right Prince, I may be pardoned and taken into Favour; it is far better for People to know their state now, than to know it then, because then there will be no Remedy.

The Apostle, in laying down Fundamental Apostolical Doctrines that were to be believed and taken notice of, and are in our Age, so that we may say, *Things written of old time were written for our Learning*; he makes this Affirmation and Position of Doctrine, *He that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his*, he doth not belong to him; if he be called a Christian, he is not a Christian, if he hath not the Spirit of Christ; It is but a Name he hath got, he hath not that which makes

makes him essentially so, for nothing can make a Christian, but having the Spirit of Christ; therefore when they would vindicate their being Christians, they prove it thus; *For he (speaking of God) hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, and we know the mind of Christ, we know him that is true, or we are in him that is true;* These things, if they were right, if they were true, were evident Demonstrations that they were a sort of Men who depended more upon the Spirit and Spiritual Teachings, and Spiritual Guidance, than upon Rules and Methods of Teaching that were in the World.

I speak of this, Friends, because you know as well as I, how averse this Age of ours hath been, to have any thing spoken of Spiritual Dispensations, or about spiritual Teachings; though a Man hath been counted formerly a wise Man, a learned Man, a Man of parts, if once he come to smatter out a little about inward Teaching, it is enough to spot him, and make him ridicul'd of his Acquaintance, as if there were no such thing in the World; We have a Book, called *the Bible*, it is from one end to the other full of such Expressions, of being led by the Spirit, *you have an Anointing which teacheth you all things;* The whole Tenor of the New Testament is about Spiritual Teaching and Divine Operations, and of *Faith being the operation of God;* and the Old Testament hath abundance of Expressions by way of Prophecy, that in
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the New Testament Days, if People would look for the Law of God, they must look for it *in their Hearts*; and if they would know God, they must look to *the Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ*; The New Testament seems to go that way, Christians should be the most Spiritual People in the World, that is the Guide, the Rule.

But, say they, the Scripture is the Foundation of Faith and Manners, Belief and Practice; this is but Dissimulation, I am afraid, that is to be found in some; What is the Scripture the Rule of Faith? and may People believe what they find in Scripture? Yes, but say some, it is best be aware for fear of Error; What is in the Scripture is serious, sound and orthodox, and did Quakers, think you, never find in Scripture that People were to *wait for the Spirit*, and *pray in the Spirit*, and *serve God in the Spirit*, and that all Religion that is not in Power, is not available, did they not find it in the Scripture? And you that are not Quakers, Did you ever read the New Testament? How came it to pass that ye never found these Texts? But some People read and read the New Testament twenty times over, and mock, and deride, and persecute a Man that shall speak of the Spirits Teaching.

I have admired at it, how intelligent Men, to whom God hath given a competent Understanding, should be so blinded; they have learned to read English, and they have read
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the New Testament over several times, and the Old Testament too, and they have read those Sentences of Christ's Doctrine, that do so currently and unanimously speak of Divine Teachings and Spiritual Operations, Spiritual Worship and Spiritual Religion, that must have some Motion and Stirring of the Holy Ghost to be the Original of it, and that all others are not acceptable to God; doubtless they have read these things, but I have often desired and do still desire that they would but read it again once more, and try and see what God will do; he hath oftentimes made use of the Holy Scripture as a means to awaken People and to open their Understandings, and let them see the Mind of the Spirit by which the Scripture is written, and the next time if they can find Scripture Text and Apostolical Doctrine, to teach People to wait upon the Spirit, I hope they will leave Scoffing and Mocking.

It hath been hitherto looked upon as an Invention, to speak of the *teaching of the Spirit* and *waiting upon the Spirit*, and being moved by the Spirit. This Apostolical Doctrine, Prayer and Worship hath been looked upon as an Invention that we have brought in; To look for the Holy Ghost in that way that was never known to our Fathers, is a fantastical Conceit of the Quakers, say they; To tell People they must be led by the Spirit in Divine Things, as in Prayer and Worship, and the like, that in these things they
must

must wait for the Spirit, was there ever any Man that was counted good for any thing that ever preached so, before they came? Do we read any such kind of thing in Scripture?

O the blindness that hath happened to this Nation! I have considered not without admiration, how the Devil (he is a Spirit too, and a wicked one) how he should have power to shove out the knowledge, belief, sense, and feeling of the Spirit of God now a days; there are thousands in this Nation that have formerly believed that it was as impossible for a Man to believe the divine motions and struglings of the Spirit of God in this life, as to raise their Fathers and Mothers out of their Graves; some of their learned Teachers have told us it is a Whimsy and Fancy, and that there was no inspiration of the Spirit now a days, but that it was a foolish fancy in us to wait for such a thing, it is needless, say they; there was an Immediate Teaching in the Apostles days, and they had the sense of the Spirit of Christ working in them, to teach them to write Letters and Epistles to the Church, which Letters and Epistles were written by the moving of the Holy Ghost, but we have no need of it now, the Holy Ghost hath brought order and government into the Church, we have it now in black and white Printed in our Books, therefore say they, there is no need of the Spirit, and People need not be acquainted with the operation of the Spirit now a days, in regard they have it in their Books what manner of Worship they must perform.

I grant them their due, that they have the direction of the Scripture, I am able to understand that People are to worship God, and pray to him, and are to meet together and to observe this and the other doctrinal Precepts there laid down; I confess I can make shift herewith to frame out a form of Religion, and if I do not mistake in the opening and explication of the Doctrine, I could make a right form too, but I am liable to mistake, another Man that understands Greek better than I, saith that the Greek word ought to be translated so, and the form ought to differ in such a respect; some say the only way of government is by Bishops, and the word bears it in the original, and another saith he hath stretched the word, for the word means Presbyter; another saith Presbyter signifies no more than choice of Church Elders and Deacons, and such like, and this is all out of one Book, the settlement of Bishops, Presbyters, and Elders.

Here a parcel of form-makers all fall out about the meaning of the word; what remedy can any mortal Man provide for this? We must not be killing and slaying one another about words; if I be an episcopal Man and say the word signifies Bishops, I may be a wicked Man still; and if another say it must be Presbyter, he may be a wicked Man too, and if another say it should be Pastor, Elders, and Deacons, he may be a wicked Man notwithstanding.

Thus

Thus they have rent and torn one another about Church Government; what remedy shall we have for this, that these quarrellings and contentions about terms and words may come to an end? Could a Man prescribe a more certain remedy for all these mistakes than this, if they had a measure of this Spirit which did work in the Apostles when they wrote down these Words, which the Apostles had in Writing them, then I say they could tell you what the Spirit meant, for the Spirit is the same and not changed, and the Words are the same to a small matter, so that if a Man had that, he might end all the controversie; but where shall we have a Man that hath this Spirit to end the controversie? There is none now a days say the Protestants, and say the Papists there is none but one that hath this infallibility; and they will not suppose that neither, for some of them say, that one Man is as infallible as another Man; there is a great brangle whether any one Man be infallible, or a great many Men together are infallible about Doctrine and Worship: This might be cured all at once if we could come to this conclusion. Papists, Protestant and Quakers, here is an end of all their out-side Worship, *He that hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his*: If there be not Spirit in it, it is not Christ's Religion and Worship.

So that they that jangle and bark and bite, are without among *Dogs and Sorcerers*, that are strangers to the Spirit of Christ; there is a spirit in them that denies the Spirit of Christ, there is

is a spirit that rules in them that are without the Spirit, for no Body that I know on, acts things without a Spirit, and without being moved. What, are good and bad all moved by the spirit, and yet are there no motions? I have sometimes turned the Question upon People, and asked them if there were no motions of the evil spirit, hath it no such kind of influence that it can move upon our spirits, that we can sensibly feel our selves thrust forth to such an action? I never met any Man that would deny it, they are so generally favourable to the wicked spirit; no Man will deny but the Devil hath a way of moving and stirring upon the spirit of a Man, and to suggest to him such an evil thing, and as I have sometimes said, it is so receiv'd an opinion, that when the malefactor comes to be arraigned at the Bar for some grievous Crime, they lay the foundation of the Indictment, such a Day he was moved and instigated by the Devil to do such a thing; here is a settled motion for the Devil, for him to influence Peoples spirits, but no way for the good Spirit of God to influence Mens spirits; here is nothing left us but a bad instigation; but to know inward motions to good things, it is not to be expected now a days.

How should ever the cunning Serpent, that would have Power over the best of us all, be said to winnow us? Christ signified to Peter, a bold and resolute Disciple; *Satan desires to have thee, and winnow thee as wheat;* if the Devil had Power over every one, to make

make them his Servants and Slaves, what Remedy have we but we must all perish and go headlong to Hell with him, unless there be some way of resisting him? That is true, say People, the Devil must be resisted, we find it in the New Testament, *Resist the Devil*; This is a good Exercise, but tell me one thing, when I go about to resist the Devil, must I resist him in my own Power? If I said you might do so, you would say I was an erroneous Preacher, and well you might; This is an old free-will Doctrine, that a man may resist the Devil by his own Power, and escape his Snares, and to do the Will of God; This hath been cried down by the Doctors of the Church of *England*, and by most of all sorts of Christians, and for our parts, since the Lord hath opened our Mouths, we did never speak a word in favour of it, as if we went about to resist the Devil in our own Strength, if we did, the Devil would make Fools of us; He that goes about to resist the Devil in his own Strength, he will entrap and ensnare him, in that Men have a propensity to sin, and by his Cunning and Subtilty may be led into a Snare before they are aware.

Thus it is agreed on all Hands, that our Power, as Men, is too weak to resist Satan's Temptation, so that you see we must have the Assistance of the Divine Power, or go all to Hell; there is no medium between these two Extreams, some extraordinary Power must assist me, or else the Devil will have me. If
you

you will not admit of a supernatural Power to come in to help me and you, we must all go to Hell, there is no Remedy: I will say my Prayers, saith one; do so, yet in the best of your Prayers therewill be Sin; and if I regard Iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: I will go and hear Sermons, say you; the very Man that preacheth will tell you, That hearing of Sermons will do you no good at all, unless there be Motions of the Spirit of God, so that you will be warpt from one thing to another, and have diversity of Doctrines, and come to no fixedness; and while you concern your selves about Doctrines, all the while the Devil prevails upon you; For the Tongue, he hath the rule of that, and as for the Hands, he hath the rule of them, and makes you do those things that by his perpetual Suggestions he moves you to; so that your going to Church and saying your Prayers signifie nothing to bring you from under the Wrath of God, and from the Captivity of the Devil: Hath not the Devil those in Captivity that go to Church, and say their Prayers, and give Alms? These are things that you can do in your own Power, the saying of your Prayers, and Fasting, and giving of Alms, these things thou mayest do, the Devil will not hinder thee, for he knows that these will not bring thee out of his Clutches, nor out of his Chains and Fetters.

There is but one Way and Means by which the Devil may be effectually resisted, that is by

by taking to my Help one stronger than he: I have gone for Help to many stronger than I, in my young Days, that I thought to be stronger Christians, and many of them did afford their Help in the Work, by Counsel, by Perswasion, by Exhortation and by Doctrine, but all this did not do; and the Reason was this, because the Devil was too strong for me, and so he was for them. As long as you go for Help to this and the other Place, 'till you find one stronger than the Devil, expect no Deliverance or Help from any thing in the World, but lay aside *all confidence in the flesh*, in any Man on Earth, or in all the Doctors Words and best Preaching you shall hear, lay aside your Confidence in them, they will never do you any good in this respect, for they will never break your Chains off; many are loaded with them, but some, I hope, are *weary and heavy laden*, and feel the weight of Sin, I pray God increase the Number; though it be a state of Sorrow, it is better than the state of *Fools*, that *make a mock of sin*; I would have you weary and heavy laden with your Sins, and brought into this state, to see your selves captivated by the strong Power of Darkness, and to see you are unable to deliver your selves out of it by your own Power.

For me to fall into the Hands of a Tyrant that is stronger than I, and never a Man to deliver me, how sad would it be? If I could find a Man stronger than this Tyrant, and that would kill him, I should be his Servant, and have

have a better Master : No *Man* can kill this Tyrant, that hath led me Captive and made me a Slave ; if he say, Be drunk, I must be drunk ; if he bid me swear, I must swear : This is the Slavery that the Devil hath got his Servants into, that whatsoever he saith, that they must do, if he bids them do it : *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me ?* I cannot deliver my self, and no Man can deliver me ; I would be acquainted with all Christians, if they could help me ; I would try all Religions that are this Day in the World, to see if there be help for me : Many are oppressed with Sin, and they go to and fro, to see what Help can be given them, to free them from the Bondage that the Devil hath them in : This sort of People are to be pitied, and the Souls of all good People will pity them, for such as these seek the Living among the Dead ; they seek to them to redeem them that cannot redeem them : We have sought, say they, for Power and Strength from them that had not enough for themselves, they were captivated as well as we, and all this because we came not to him that is stronger than the Devil. You will take the same course, and stay till grey Hairs come, and you go down to the Grave with Sorrow, unless you come to one stronger than the Devil, and then trust in him, believe in him, and expect Deliverance by him. The Reason why People do not expect Deliverance is, because these Two Things are shut out of their Belief.

I. The

I. They believe not that a sinful Life will carry them to Destruction.

II. They think there is not any possibility in this World to live any other than a sinful Life.

The Devil hath brought Men to this pass, that they live as easily in a sinful Life, as a Fish in the Stream : We are in the way, say they ; when we were baptized, we were initiated into the Christian Church, we were Baptized with the Sign of the Cross, that shews we are Soldiers of Christ and bear his Badge and Banner upon us ; and the Man said at that Time, I was made a Child of God and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven ; if this be not true, then I am cheated and deceived, for I am to believe this to be true ; the Church hath affirmed that these things are to be believed, and to question the Verity of the Church, is to question all.

I would question whether thousands find the Truth of it. When thou wert baptized, there was a kind of Covenant and Bargain made for this Child of God and Heir of Eternal Life, That he should forsake the Devil and all his Works, and the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and the sinful Lusts of the Flesh : And there is Security given that this Child shall never serve the Devil and sinful Lusts, and never be proud, but serve God and keep his Commandments : Now this Security being taken, then they suppose that this Child will certainly be an Heir of

of the Kingdom of God. It is very true, stand to thy Church; if this Security that is taken for a Child be but effectual, then there is no doubt of being a Child of God and an Inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven. But if this Security fail, is the Church to blame if Men's Hopes to Eternal Life fail? Was it not my Condition, That thou shouldest forsake the Devil and all his Works, and the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World, and the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, and if thou break the Bargain, and thy part of the Covenant, and miss of Eternal Life, who is to blame? Look to the Security, see that thou forsake the Devil and all his Works, and the Poms and Vanities of the World. But thou mayest rather say, I have enjoyed as many of them as I could; and for the Lusts of the Flesh, I have enjoyed as much of them as I can; and, what, dost thou believe thy self to be a Child of God and an Heir of the Kingdom of Heaven, notwithstanding?

If I promise to deliver a Man such a Bale of Silk, or other Goods, upon the Payment of so much Money, if I fail in delivering the Goods, he will not deliver the Money; A Man must forsake the Devil and all his Works, and never lust after the Poms and Vanities of this World; that is a Child of God, let us see him grow up, and if he goes on to be faithful in this Covenant till he die, I do not at all question but he will be an Heir of Eternal Life; but when all this is broken, and the Security

curity signifies nothing, and the Man is given up to serve the Devil, breaks all God's holy Laws, erreth and strayeth from the Way of God's Commandments like a lost Sheep, and grasps at the Poms and Vanities of the World, as much as he can, and thinks he gets no more than comes to his share; and when he shall indulge the Lusts of his Flesh, this is a Child of the Devil; he is a Child of that Spirit that was a Lyar from the beginning. Never talk of being a Child and an Heir of God's Kingdom, such a Man is in Fetters, he is to go along with the Devil and his Angels, and there is a Kingdom prepared for them, a Kingdom of Darkness, and he must have his Portion with them in Everlasting Misery: *Tophet is prepared of old for all the workers of iniquity.*

What, for those that are Baptized? Yes. But do not you deny Baptism?

No, not I, I would have Men and Women Baptized with a Baptism that will do them some good. Some have seen the Vanity and Weakness of this kind of Baptism, and called it Baby Baptism; and therefore would go and be Baptized and plunged in the Water over Head and Ears, but they came up again with the same Heart and Mind, and the same Polluted Soul. *John* baptized in *Jordan*, and all *Jerusalem* and *Judea* came to be baptized of him: There were a sort of Baptized Persons then that crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, that never did them harm in his Life, but much good.

This Baptism had never an Apostolical Patron, but there is another Baptism that is so infallible a Baptism, that if a Man were surely Baptized withal, he was sure of Heaven, he would never need any other Assurance of Heaven than to be Baptized with this Baptism, Jesus Christ: The Lip of Truth speaks of him, *He that Believeth and is Baptized shall be saved*: He shall be saved in spite of the Devil and all his Temptations, in spite of Persecutions and the Stumbling Blocks laid before him. Here is a Baptism worth a Man's while, worth all his Labour, if he could obtain it; *He that cometh after me, saith John the Baptist, he shall Baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire*; Here is a Baptism belongs to Christians, an Ordinance ordained. Far be it from us to deny Baptism; but we would light of the right, since there are so many sorts: This Baptism is so right and certain, that it ascertains a Man of his Salvation but it is done by *the Holy Ghost and with fire*. If it be by the Holy Ghost, then it is far enough off from us, for there is no Holy Ghost in our Days, say some, so this Baptism is ceased, and Inspiration is ceased: If the *Holy Ghost and Fire* be the Matter of Baptism, the thing being failed and ceased, the Consequence cannot follow; thou and I cannot be baptized because there is no working of the Holy Ghost in our Days; say some, this Baptism is *with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*; with Fire for burning up our Corruption

ons, and purifying our Hearts. But the Holy Ghost hath done working upon Men, say they, why, then there is an end of Baptism: A Man is hungry, and when his Time comes to eat, he hath no Victuals, yet he sits him down as if he did eat; will this feed and nourish him? So Men now a days, they have a Baptism wherewith they are Baptized, but Baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire, is the right Baptism, therefore do not Baptize until you find the Holy Ghost, this will be far better; this is the Baptism that they which come to know it, are sure of Salvation by it; for by this Baptism they are born up and tinged in their Souls with the Divine Spirit of Christ Jesus, proceeding from the Father and the Son, till they receive his Likeness, and so die unto Sin: *As many as were Baptized, were Baptized into Christ's death.* He openeth it himself, *in that he died he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth he liveth unto God; so that they that were baptized, were baptized into Christ's Death; and you that are dead unto sin, how should you live any longer therein?*

These that were baptized lived without Sin, If that be true, never any lived without Sin but Christ only? Yes, saith the Apostle, *you that were free from Sin, are alive to Righteousness;* their Life stood before in Sin, and now that Life is taken away by Baptism, and they are alive to Christ, and he that liveth he liveth to God. He that comes to be partaker of the first Resurrection, if he live Ten,

Twenty, Forty or an Hundred Years, he liveth to God, he liveth no more in the Pumps and Vanities of the World, and the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, but *he liveth unto God*: This Baptism, whosoever comes to be baptized with it, shall be saved; so that we do not deny Baptism.

But we hear say, That you deny the Lord's Supper.

We had never such a Thought, God knows, there is nothing that our Souls long after more; but People have been making a kind of Work of their own, they have lost a Reality, and make Shadows, as Children do, who when they see things made in the House for Service, they will make the like in Sand and Clay: People do not see what a great thing it is to attain to the Supper of the Lord; as things came into an Evangelical Opening, they speak then more lively and freshly of things. *Behold*

I stand at the door and knock, if any man open to me, I will come in and sup with him and be with me. For the understanding of this Text: If you go and examine, and search all the Commentators you can find, see what the Learned Men say of it, see if they do not apply this to the Inward Call of the Spirit and Grace of Christ, to let him into our Hearts; and would one think that those that wrote these things should be against the Spiritual Dispensation of things? They say that the knocking at the Door of the Heart signifies the Call of God's Spirit at the Door of the Heart.

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There are two sorts of Sinners that God knocketh at the Door of their Hearts: One is a Man that is weary of his Sin; for his part, he wisheth that he might never sin more: As soon as he perceives the Knock, and is called upon to let in the Grace of God, to help him against Temptation, he freely opens his Heart to receive it, and saith; With all my Heart, I will entertain and welcome the Grace of God; glad I am that God hath had so much Patience towards me, and since God offers his Grace, I will embrace this Grace of God above all Pleasures, and I will take it into my Heart; the Grace of Christ is the greatest Jewel that I know. Honest *Paul*, he took this Course, and prayeth, Lord take away this Tempter; here is a Temptation that troubleth me, and I am not willing to yield, for all the Devil follows me with it; He cried unto the Lord, and besought him three times, earnestly, to take away the Temptation: And the Lord answers him, *My Grace is sufficient for thee*. What matter if the Tempter buffet thee, and the Temptation trouble thee, hast thou not received my Grace into thy Heart? thou art a Believer and thy Trust is in me, and *my Grace is sufficient for thee*: Let the Tempter do his worst, keep thou to the Grace of God, and thou wilt withstand and overcome the Temptation when it comes.

If a Man openeth his Heart and receiveth Christ whea he comes, then you shall find such an Alteration in that Man, that go and

carry him the same Temptation which prevailed over him the last Week, it will not do with him now; tho' he be as weak as Water, and as prone to Corruption and Iniquity as before, yet now having a Faith begotten in him, that the grace of God will defend him, he keeps out of the Devils Snares. Now this Man trusting in this grace till his Sin and Iniquity be purged out; now is the time to spread the Table; there is a clean Heart, and the Heavenly Guests are now come, and the Dainties of the Kingdom are brought to him for his Nourishment. *Now, saith Christ, I will come in and sup with him, and my Father also will come, and we will sup with him, and be with us.* This never happens to any Body so long as the Table and Heart is foul; for the Table must be clean, and the Devil and Sin thrown out, and then will the Lord confirm and ratifie and seal the Covenant; so that here is a Seal with a Witness. When a Man hath this Testimony of the Love of God, that God is reconciled to him in Christ, then Christ will come in, and he will bring his Father, and they will sup with him; and this is that which will give compleat satisfaction to such a Soul.

All the Tongues of Men and Angels are too short to speak of these things, as they are in themselves, but they are all manifested by the Spirit. All the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God, are manifested by the Spirit of God; now to say there is no Spirit to be regarded

now

now a days, that is as much as to say, we must never regard the Kingdom of God, for *no Man can discern the things of God but the Spirit of God, no Man can tell what they be; As no Man can know the things of a Man but the Spirit of God.*

But I must look to this and the other Form, and Mark, and Method about them, for we can know nothing of the things of God themselves.

I hope you are all of another Judgment, and believe that this is a Trick and Cheat of the wicked one; People do find the Spirit and will feel it, if they will wait upon the Motions of it. I do not only mean when you are here together, but when you are separated one from another; when you feel the Motions of this good Spirit, embrace them, and make them yours. This Spirit is a Gift that is given; so may a Shilling or a piece of Bread be held worth to a poor Creature, but if he receive it not, he may perish for all that; it is not his, tho' I have appointed it to be his, and have separated it from my other Substance to be his. If he receive not what I offer and would give him, he may Perish for all that.

Here is *Grace and Truth* comes by Jesus Christ, and God hath offered it to all Men, in that he hath raised up Christ from the Dead; the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men; but all Men have not received it, therefore all Men have it not; and they that have not the Grace of Christ,

and the *Spirit of Christ*, are none of his; but it doth not follow that they never will be none of his. When they have received the Gift by Christ, and say, I will be his Sheep or Lamb, they will come into his Favour by that Gift, and shall partake of the good things of his Fathers Kingdom; but till they have received this Gift, they are not the better for it, they have not any Benefit by the death of Christ; they have no help no benefit by it, except it be the Patience and long Suffering of God, who for Christs sake bears with their Weakness, and waits to be gracious, and for Christs sake offers them Favour; but they are not come to the Possession of it, till they open their Hearts, and receive the Grace of Christ; then they are convinced of Christs end, and that there is a possibility of enjoying the Spirit of God, and of being taught and led by it.

Take this along with you, that it is your absolute and indispensable Duty to wait from day to day upon the great God of Heaven, *the Giver of every good and perfect Gift*, that you may have that blessed Gift, that you may have the Assistance of a greater Power than your own to lead you out of Sin into Righteousness, that through Jesus Christ you may be acceptable to God.

Sermon

Sermon V.

Christ the Way, the Truth, and
the Life.

*Preached at Grace-Church Street, April 18.
1687.*

I Fear the High Places are not taken away ; it hath been so in all Ages, and it is manifestly so in this Day ; where the Heart is not rightly prepared for the Lord, there the High Places are not taken away : For all the High Places in the time of *Israel's* Idolatry, they were ever set up when they departed from the Lord, and all the High Places now they are up in a time of Ignorance of God, when People have forgotten the Lord, then they exalt themselves, then Pride, and Arrogance, and every evil way prevails upon us ; but when Men come to seek the Lord with Uprightness, that brings down their high Conceits, that brings every one into Humility ; for every one comes to be convinced in themselves that none can find the Lord, but as they are brought to be Humble ; nay, indeed, none seek after

him aright but such, none have the promise of finding him but the Humble.

Therefore it is the duty of every one that is a real inquirer and seeker after God, to know the right preparation of the Mind, to know themselves in such a frame of Spirit, that they may seek in hope, that they may have a right and just expectation of finding him whom they are seeking after; for this hath been the reason that a great many have been frustrated in their endeavours, and in their purposes of seeking after the Lord, they have not been rightly prepared for him to manifest himself unto them, they have not known the *Preparation of his Sanctuary*; there was a peculiar preparation that was requisite to those that drew near unto the Sanctuary of God, they were Hallowed, that is, made Holy ere they drew near to the Holy Place; but alas this hath been greatly neglected in our Days, unholy People with unholy Minds have been seeking after the Holy God, they have been enquiring after a Holy way, and were not prepared to walk in it, there was nothing raised in their Minds, in their Souls, that was fit to walk in that way.

For so long as Men or Women stand in Unity with their Sins, with their Lusts and Concupiscence, with the Spirit of this World, and the way of it, they are not capable of receiving that which should lead them into the way of Holiness; nay, if it appears to them, they cannot receive it, for it is with them as with other Guests, there be other Lovers al-
ready

ready let in, which imploy the Powers and faculties of their Souls, so that if the most beloved of all, the most excellent, if *the Chiefest of Ten Thousand* do appear, they cannot see a comeliness in him. The Prophet speaking of this state and condition of Men, did prophesie concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, *when we shall see him there is no comeliness in him why we should desire him*; and so it hath happened to a great many now a days, though the Truth hath appeared to them, yet they have not looked upon it as a pleasant way, as a way desirable, but a way to be shun'd if possible: What shifts have a great many People made to keep themselves, if possible, out of the way of Truth, arguing for this and that, and disputing for one way and another that was out of Truth's way, out of the way of Holiness? What was the meaning of all their arguments, but to tell us they might be happy, they might be saved though they did not come into Truth's way, and walk in Truth's way? and though they did abide in those things, that were contrary to the Testimony of Truth in their own Hearts, yet it might go well with them.

This is the strength of the arguments of all sorts, of all persuasions in the World, that have been arguing themselves out of the Truth, and would argue us out of the Truth too, and would take the liberty to do those things which are not agreeable therewith; but now the reason of this is because the preparation is wanting, they are those that have no need of Truth,
and

and that have no need of God, and of a Saviour; but think they can make shift without them; he is not become the chiefest to them, they can abide in the high places, they can call upon the name of the Lord, and they can worship in the Groves, and in the high places both together, like as those Nations that were brought to inhabit the Kingdom of *Israel* when the ten Tribes were carried away, they sent for Priests to teach them, they sent back to the King of *Assyria* to send them some Priests, to teach them to worship the God of their Country, and when the Priest came to teach them, he taught them the Ceremonies of the Law, and the divers observations that the Jews used to practise in that Country, and so they grew into a formality of serving the God of *Israel*, They called upon the Name of the Lord, and every Nation Worshipped their own Gods.

How is this Nation, and the Nations of *Europe*, now inhabited with such a People that are calling upon the Name of the Lord, but every one worshipping their own Gods; one makes Gold and Silver his God, another makes his Pleasure his God, another his Honour, another this, that, and the other Lust, and they bow down to them, that is, they yield themselves to their Lusts, concupiscence and corruptions that they stand in unity with, but they call upon the Name of the Lord too; they do apply themselves to some kind of form of worship, which they say is unto the immortal and invisible God, but alas they come not to the Knowledge of God by

by this. All that the Priests could do, that the King of *Affyria* sent back, they brought not the *Samaritans* to the Knowledge of the God of *Israel*, they only brought them to a Report of such a God, that had set up such a Law: They had the Report of it, and for fear that the Lions should tear them in pieces, they would enter into that Form, but they worshipped their own Gods still.

So it is now, People do not come to the Knowledge of the true God, the living God, by entring into any Form of Religion; for instance, Prayer, Hearing or any Ordinance or Church-Fellowship, these give not Men the Knowledge of God, there is but one way to come to that, but only one. Men have found a great many, it is past your Skill and mine to reckon up the many ways that Men have found out upon the Face of the Earth, how they might come to the Knowledge of God, and to Peace and Reconciliation with him; but they have only play'd the Fools and spent their Time in vain, especially they that own the Scriptures of Truth to be a true and faithful Record of the Mind and Will of God, they play the Fool abominably; for the Scripture that they give so much Reputation to in their Profession doth testify the way is but one, and there is no other way for People to be reconciled to God, than by coming in to Christ; to be found in him, to be regenerated and born into his Nature, and have his Qualities put upon them,

That

That as he was pure, they may be pure; that he that sanctifieth, and they being sanctified by him, may become both one, and so be reconciled to the Father through him. This you know is the common Profession of Christendom, or at least of our Nation: And in other Nations, the common Profession is, There is no Mediator but one, no Reconciler but one: Indeed some others hold there may be other Mediators, and that there are others that may contribute to them by their Mediation, and by their Prayers and Merits, but the generality of the Nation are otherwise.

Now for People to fall out, and say, My way is best, and thy way is not best, and to fall into Contests about many ways, when the Scripture concludes but one Way, is not well; We were better all agree about this Doctrine, That there is no possibility of Reconciliation with God, since we are fallen out with him, and since Sin hath made a separation, there is no way of being reconciled again to God, but by and through our Lord Jesus Christ; nor by him neither, unless we receive of his Spirit to quicken us; nothing can quicken us, enliven us, or recommend us to God, but the Spirit of Christ operating and working in our Hearts, that he may prepare us for the Father's Kingdom.

If People would agree upon this, there would be an end of all Labour, and Toyl, and Jangling about the right way, for the Consequence and Conclusion would be thus;
That

That Man that doth not know in himself the sanctifying Power of the Spirit of Christ Jesus, he is out of the way to Reconciliation with God, let his Form and Profession be what it will: If therefore he be reconciled to God, it must be by and through the Mediator, and he will never recommend him to the Father till he hath made him a Temple to let in the Spirit of Christ, to work in his Heart, to fit him for the Kingdom of God: And Men have no other way to come to it; for though they be zealous in every Prayer and Form, it signifies nothing to any great purpose, their Hope will be frustrated; *There is no other way (saith Christ) of coming to the Father, but by me; I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.* If I am out of the Truth, I am out of the Way; and if I am out of the Way, then I cannot come to the end of the Way. This is plain reasoning among Men: If I tell a Lye, that is out of the Truth; If I have vain Communication, or deceive or wrong my Neighbour, that is out of Truth; what is manifest in my Conscience to be contrary to the Truth, if I am in it, I am out of the way; though I be strict in the way, as to Profession, yet I am out of the Way to God, I am out of the Truth, there is no way to God but by Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life; whoever is out of him, is out of the Way; which made the Apostle say, *That his labour, endeavour and desire was, that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness,*

teousness, but having on the righteousness of Christ Jesus.

Many Men think to recommend themselves to God by their righteous, just and honest Dealings, and doing Wrong to no Body: This is good in it self, but doth not recommend us to God, unless it be done by the righteous and holy Spirit of Christ Jesus, unless it be of his Working; he must have the working of Righteousness and Truth in us; he must plant it, and it must grow by his working, if it be acceptable to the Father; *for without me, saith Christ, you can do nothing.* A Man out of Christ, a Stranger to his Spirit, may do something, but nothing available to the well-being of his Soul, till he have Reconciliation by Christ Jesus: If he be reconciled to God, this Mediator must be the Reconciler, and he must fit and prepare him for Reconciliation with the Father.

All the Divisions, Sorts and Sects of Religion, they all come to an end if this Measuring Line be laid to them; they all appear too short; and there is nothing will do a Man good but that Religion that obligeth and ties him to the good Pleasure of God, through the Spirit of the Mediator, which he feels working in him, by which he is raised from Death to some degree of Life: When he is sensible what a Burthen Sin is to his Life, and that godly Life which he hath, is burthened with every Sin, and oppressed with every vain Thought, and every vain Word: If he be not
in

in some measure quickened he is not sensible of this Burthen, but being quickned, he is sensible of the Burthen that lies upon his Life, by reason of his Sin; and then, being under the Weight of his Sin, he calls to God for his Assistance; he cries to God to help him; he now knows that he hath striven and laboured in vain. O God of all Grace, if thou vouchsafe not Help to my Soul; if thou dost not interpose by the Assistance of thy Grace, I cannot overcome this Sin. There is a continual Cry to God for Divine Assistance, and as they cry to God for Assistance, he ministers Assistance to them, by which they are able to overcome the Enemy of their Souls, and all Temptations when they come: And when a Man finds such Divine Assistance, his Faith is strengthened and confirmed, and so he *fights the good fight of Faith*, and at last gets the Victory; Victory over his Sin, and his own Lusts, and Concupiscence, and Victory over the Assaults and Temptations of the Adversary, and at last he comes, through the Grace of God, *to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world.*

Now when People do thus, it is by the Grace of God: This Life of Righteousness, Sobriety and Godliness is not the effect of their Labour and Exercise, and of their Endeavours herein, but it is the effect of the Holy Spirit that hath been the Teacher. When you see a Man is grown a good Scholar, eminent

nent in all sorts of Learning, you will conclude he did not attain to all this of himself, he could not learn this and the other Language, this and the other Art and Science of himself; No, he had some judicious and able Master and Teacher, who communicated of his Learning and Knowledge to his Disciple and Scholar: This is the efficient cause of his Improvement. Now if a Man, by the Grace and the Spirit of God, and the Teachings of it, live a holy, godly Life, this is the effect of something; he did not always live such a Life, How comes he to live such a Life now? Is it by his own Industry, Labour and Exercise? No, it is by being exercised, taught and led by the Spirit of God; so that it is the effect of the Grace of God that he should live such a holy Life, though it is not the meritorious cause of it, as he is a Creature, but acceptable to God in Christ the Mediator.

Thus a Man comes to be justified and accepted, not because he is a Godly Man, but is made so by the Spirit of God: *You are not under the law* (saith the Apostle) *but under grace*: You are under the Teachings of it, under the Directions of it: Grace can reprove People; for that Grace and that Truth that comes by Christ, and manifests it self as a Light in the Hearts of Transgressors, reproves their Sin, and calls them out of it; it re-proves them for it, and exhorts them to leave it, both at one Time; so that we must acknowledge all our Righteousness, Holiness
and

and Obedience to be of God, and all that we do in order thereunto, as it is done by the Teaching, by the Influence and Operation of the Grace of God given us in Christ Jesus; it is the effect of him who is our Mediator, he worketh it in us and for us of his good pleasure.

If we be justified, we are not justified for a righteous, holy Life, and for our Obedience; but we are justified through Christ, who worketh a godly Life in them that believe, so that a Man is not justified by any other way or means; and all other ways a Man takes of being reconciled to God are vain and fruitless, and have been spoken against by all that were moved by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament. Saith the Prophet, *what shall I come before the Lord withall?* I am fallen under Death and Sin, and in a separation from God, I would fain be reconciled to him; what shall I do to be reconciled to God? He goes about to reckon without Christ, and without Faith and Holiness. *Shall I take a thousand Rams, and ten thousand Rivers of Oil?* Shall I come nearer still? *Shall I make an Offering of the Fruit of my Body, for the sin of my Soul?* Shall I offer my *first-born to God*; that I may not be rejected and brought to a separation from him? Thus Men when they come to be sensible, do feel in themselves that all this is to no purpose: The Answer comes. Thou maist live, but all thy Contrivances about making an Offering are

are vain: *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what to do.* It is not thy finding this way and that way, *viz.* thy Rams, and thy Oil and thy First-born; it is no way of thy devising and imagining that can reconcile thee to me, *I have shewed thee, O Man, what is good.* What is this that is shewed? It is comprised in a short compass, *It is to love Mercy, to do Justice, and to walk humbly with thy God.* Will this serve without offering Rams and Oil, and offering my First-born? This will do if thou canst but *love Mercy* when it is shewn thee; that is, embrace Mercy, and love it. He hath shewed Mercy to all Men; then love it and receive it; *do justly*, leave every thing that is unrighteous, and do that which is just in the sight of God, but do not boast of thy Justice and Righteousness, but *walk humbly with thy God*; here is the whole Duty of Man. This looks as if I should go to Works, and forbear something, in order to my Justification.

Indeed the Consideration of these kind of Lessons do corrupt some Men, and put them upon doing this or that, and upon forbearing this or that, and hath brought many to Confession and great Abstinence, and put them upon great doings, thinking this would answer the Justice of God; I have loved Mercy, and giving all I had to the Poor. If I do justly, and abstain from this and the other Liberty; if I walk humbly, that is, if I humble my self by this and the other manner of Penance and Contrition, then I do what
God

God requires, and then I have pleased God. Now all that have gone this way of working, to do justly and love mercy, and to make themselves humble, and humbled themselves low in such a manner, they have missed the Mark. *He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good*; that it is impossible for fallen Man to answer this himself; he may be convinced of his Duty to do Justice, but by his own Power and Strength he cannot do it; there are so many Temptations from without, and so many from within, such a propensity in Nature, that will prevail against all the Bonds of Charity that he can make.

Therefore is *Help laid upon one that is mighty*; without the Grace of God that comes by Christ Jesus, a Man can never do it, tho' Convinced: Tho' the Lord hath shewed him what is good, he shews us that we are unable of our selves, he hath taken care to send his Son: *God hath so loved the World, that he hath sent his Son into the World*, that he might help those that have need of help, that every one that is in Distress might have an Eye to Christ, *the Author and Finisher of their Faith*; when Men have a reference to their Faith in Christ, this makes their Duty acceptable; I cannot do it except the Lord strengthen me; therefore I will have respect to the Mediator, Christ Jesus, who was sent for a Light into the World. God sends forth his Grace to every one to lay hold on, that generally believe, that tho' they are unable to do what God requires,

quites, yet he will enable them to do it; *For as many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God, tho' they were the Devil's Children before: He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.* He abides always the same in his Grace to Men, he is in his Operation to them the same; he offers Grace to them that are out of a frame of Mind to receive it; they may know that his Power will give them Ability, and that whatsoever they do of themselves will prove fruitless, because it is not done in Christ's Name and Power, and so not acceptable to God.

The greatest thing that we are to be concern'd about, if we will be Religious, and concern our selves about divine Matters, about the Kingdom of God and the World to come, is, to see what frame of Mind we are in at present, whether the high Places are taken away, whether we are not exalted in our own Conceits of Knowledge and Wisdom, and reckon not to be beholding to him for his Grace. If we be highly conceited, and think we can stand upon our own Legs, the high Places are not taken away: Men are not prepared to seek the God of their Fathers; therefore, let every one mind turning to God, and see how it is with you; see whether there be a Mind brought low enough to be subject to Christ, and to the gracious Teachings of the Spirit.

A man may say, I can make a good Sermon, I can make a good Prayer and Exhortation,

tation, and I can make a Book, and send it abroad, I can do all this by my own Parts and Abilities; so thou maist, and maist make it all full of good Words, but thou canst never make it acceptable to God; for *without me, saith Christ, you can do nothing.* Thou must have the assistance of the Spirit of Christ, else thou canst not make a good Prayer, nor a good Book, nor any thing good; God esteems *the very Plowing of the Wicked to be an Abomination* to him. Where the Mind is not exercised by the Spirit of God, if he should pray from Morning to Night, and spend all his Days in Pennance, it will do him no good. *If I, saith David, regard Iniquity, you may think I am a Man in favour wuh God, a Man after God's own Heart; yet if I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear my Prayer.* What signifies Prayers and Sermons, made of good Words, if they come not from a Heart separate from Iniquity? If it be not so, it will do no good at all, in point of Acceptance with God.

O let the fear of the Lord enter upon every Heart; wait all to feel the Divine Power of the Lord, that brings down every high Thought, that so you may look to the Preparation of your Heart; that is a right Preparation, when the People are so low, so broken and so tender, that they are nothing in their own Eyes, but what the Lord will make them to be: then they are as Clay to the Hands of the Potter, they are fashioned by his Hands,
and

and made the *Workmanship of God in Christ Jesus, the one Mediator between God and Man.* They must bear Christ Jesus his Likeness, bear his Heavenly Image, they must have his Qualities, and have the same Mind in them that was in him: *I do always that which pleaseth my Father,* saith the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed he hath the doing of things in the Hearts of Men, and God is pleased with him, and where Men have the doing of them themselves, they are thrown back as Dung in their Faces; where any aim at infallible Justification, where Men have a right Preparation of Heart, so to seek the God of their Fathers, as to find him, and be accepted of him, it is through Jesus Christ, in whom he is well pleased.

In all your Assemblies, Prayers, Exercises and Meditations, you must be separated and drawn off from your former Lovers, and you must be joined to him that God hath sent to be a Leader and Guide unto you, then you will find daily his Assistance; and as you have Assistance from him, you will find Acceptance with God, and he will shew you the Father, and that and nothing else will satisfy the Soul hungering and thirsting after God. *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.* So when Christ the Mediator comes to have wrought so far as the purifying of the Soul, and the Sanctification thereof, and thereby fitted it for his Glory, such holy Souls shall behold his Glory; *For the Lord will give*
Grace

Grace and Glory, and no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly.

That you may be brought to this State, and kept and preserved in it; that the Heavens may rain down Fatness upon you, and that you may feel the living Vertues that flow from Christ to every Member; this is the Labour and Travel of the Servants of God, for their own Souls, and the Souls of others that are in Unity and Fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

Sermon VI.

Captive Sinners set free by Jesus Christ.

Preach'd at Devonshire-House, April 29th, 1688.

There is nothing will make People live to God, but that which they receive from God: For as all Men by Nature are in a state of Death, so there must be something beyond Nature to make them alive again; and that it that every one ought to wait upon God for: that you may feel something that is supernatural: And that you may be acquainted with God's Gift, *The Gift of God*, saith the Scripture,

Scripture, is *Eternal Life*. Many find a Life in this World that is not the Gift of God: The Life that People have in Sin it is not the Gift of God, the Delights and Pleasures of this World are become a Life unto them: The World is that to which every one must die; they that are not dead to that, they live all to themselves, they do not live to God, for none can live to God, but by the Life that comes from him: That which People receive of Man, gathers them unto Man; that which they receive of God carries them to God.

So Men have made Gatherings, and have communicated of what they have to one another, and by vertue thereof, have made them a People: Many Men have gathered many People, many Churches, and they live to them that gathered them; they do not live to God, for want of receiving something from God, but all they that come to receive the Gift of God; they die to the World, and they come to live such a Life as the World doth not love, doth not care for, and hath no Pleasure in: *If you were of the World, saith Christ, the World would love you, but because you are not of the World they hate you.* How should this be understood, were not they some of the Men of that Generation? How doth he mean they were not of the World? *Why, I have taken you out of it,* saith he; and yet they were there still, and they were named by certain Names, the Sons of such and such Men; yet

for all that, they were not of the World; and that which differed them was, being made Partakers of that Life which the World knew not.

And so there will be an Enmity in the World against the Life of Holiness; they will hate any Body that lives in it; and as it was then, so it is at this Day, they that are of the Word, they hear and receive those things that are of the World from the Men of this World; but they that are of God, they hear them that are of God, and they receive the things of God, and their greatest Comfort and Joy that they have is in their Communion with God in Christ Jesus, through whom, as through a Conduit-Pipe, the Blessings of the Father are ministred to them, and through whom, as from the Fountain of Life, their Life is renewed from Day to Day.

But these things are hidden from the World, *from the wise and prudent of it*; they cannot dig into the Depth, nor ascend to this Height; they cannot *comprehend the length and the breadth of the things of God, which are in Christ Jesus*; they may reach unto something of the Love of God, that is in the Creation: they can tell when the Sun shines upon them, and when the Rain falls upon their Fields; and when it falls in due season they call it a Blessing; and while the Covenant with Winter and Summer remains, they look upon it as comfortable, and perhaps sometime will be-
trow a Saying, *I thank God for it.* All these things

things are beneath us, and *there is neither love nor hatred known by them all. I saw the wicked, saith one, I beheld his dwelling-place, and he flourished like unto a green bay-tree, and was wicked still, for all this.*

But now, they that see where they live that live to God, they can say, That their Leaf never withers, but they *bring forth their fruit in due season*; but he did not so. But the wicked Man, *that flourished like a green bay-tree, behold I looked and he was removed, and his place was no more to be found*: There came a Blasting upon all his Blessing and his Flourishing came to an end; his Riches perished, and his good things passed away from him: But the Man *whose delight is in the law of God, and makes it his Pleasure both Night and Day, he is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, whose leaf never fades, and brings forth his fruit in due season.*

But this is hid; there is no body in the World but would have something of this Life too; they would be sure of Eternal Life, but they would not die to the other Life, they would not be crucified to the World, they would not be separated from their Lovers; if they could get into the state of a righteous Man an Hour or Two before they die, when they are sure they shall die, it would please them; but to live that Life that is to God, is to die to the World, and to part with that they have, their Comfort, their Joy, their Peace and Honour, and all their worldly Enjoyments

joyments in, before they can come to receive the Gift of God, they think is hard: But they that look after it, and have a mind to find it out without parting with the World's Life, they befool themselves.

Do not you see how Men have befooled themselves in those days? They have sought after the Kingdom of God 'till they are scattered in their own way; they are quarrelling about their own way, as if they never had any Scripture to be their Rule: They cry the Scripture is their Rule; this is the way to Eternal Life, saith one; and this is the way, saith another; and the one and the other say all these ways are false saving their own; and all these Contenders about the way to Eternal Life, they all say the Scriptures is the Rule.

And yet the Scriptures speaks of the way too, and tells us the way plainly, the way to Rest, Peace and Life Eternal. If the Scriptures had been silent in it, and had said nothing but of Genealogies and Histories of Armies and Wars, it had been something; but the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament speaks of a certain way to Eternal Life, and say it is the way of Holiness, *A way shall be cast up for the redeemed and the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, which the way-faring man, though a fool, shall not mistake in it:* Though he never took a degree at the University, he shall not err in it; though he be a Fool in the account of the

World, and never understood Greek or Latin; yet he shall not err in this way.

The way that leads to the Kingdom of God, is called the way of Holiness; but while many have been reading in their Books, they have been contending for a way of Unholiness; no wonder then they have been quarrelling about it, and have all misfed it, and that in the main point of all: Let them make a way, which way they will, and frame it never so wisely, according to the best Wit they have, be it a way that hath all material Qualifications that should make it a way of Holiness, these Men may walk in it, but they will never find the way to the Kingdom of God, though they have sought it out: Go to one place and another place, and ask them what is your way? Our way (say they) is the right way, the most sure and certain way that can be found for People to walk in: But whither will it lead me? It will lead thee to the Kingdom of God: That is it I would have; but will it lead me to Holiness? No, never in this World, you must never come to Holiness; do the best thou canst do here, it is but Sin; the best days work thou makest is but Sin; the best Child of God on Earth cannot live a Day without Sin: Do you hold out that in your way? Yes; then I have done with that, and go to another People.

So, many have gone many ways to the Kingdom of God, and when the upshot is come,

come, they have found every way a polluted way, a sinful way; I know this way will never lead me to God; Sin first led me from God. I had been well enough as I was created at first, if I had never sinned against God; a sinful way will lead me from God. It is against common Sense, and against Rationality, to say we did first go from God by Sin, and must go to God again by a sinful way. Who will believe that such a way leads to God's Kingdom? that that way will lead men to God that will not lead them to Holiness?

The Scripture saith, *If I regard Iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me*; though a Man keeps close to Meetings, and Ordinances, and Duties, and Performances, Iniquity it seems remains still; there is no rooting it out in this World: This continuing and remaining with a Man, makes all his Performances, and Duties, and Prayers unacceptable to God; they are all turned back again upon him, and cast as Dung upon his Face, and true enough too; so that here is no coming unto God in this way; the Comers thereunto know well enough they are not reconciled to God, if they are Men that are Conscientious.

There are a sort of People so stupid and fordid in their Judgments, that if a Man tells them they are reconciled to God, they will believe him though Conscience reproves them an hundred times a day. If the Parson of

the Parish say, That he hath made *this Child an heir of the kingdom of God and an inheritor of eternal life*; I know some have believed it forty Years after, and have born themselves up upon this Man's Word all rheir Life: Do you think there is any danger of me, that in Baptism was made an Inheritor of Eternal Life, and an Heir of the Kingdom of God? God hath not appointed Ordinances in his Church for nothing.

I speak not of such sordid hard-hearted People, that never entred into themselves to know how it was with them, whether they are converted; but I speak of sober conscientious People, that will not be cheated in a Point of Salvation, though they have been deceived a great while they may be undeceived: Then they must take this for certain Doctrine, that nothing can reconcile them to their Maker but that which takes away Sin. *God hears not Sinners*, he will never be reconciled to a Man in this World, as a Sinner; but there are many thousands (blessed be God) in this Age, as well as in other Ages, that were Sinners, and reconciled to God through Christ, and had Remission of Sin, but never any Man in his Sin was reconciled to God, though he did believe the Truth, if he did not come to the Sanctification of the Spirit, he could never be reconciled to God.

So that there hath been in all Ages a way of the working of the Spirit of God in the Hearts of them that believe, to prepare them
for

for the sinless Kingdom, for that glorious Kingdom, into which nothing that hurteth, and defileth, and corrupteth, can enter. And because we cannot enter with Corruption and Defilement, he hath appointed the Ministration of his Spirit to work out that which might hinder to cleanse us from Sin, that we might have an abundant entrance into his glorious Kingdom; so that whilst they say there is an impossibility of living without Sin, I had as live they had said, there is an Impossibility of entering into the Kingdom of God; for never any shall come into the Kingdom of God, but those that are without Sin, for there is no Purgatory after Death.

The Papists have a better conceit than the Protestants in that respect: The Protestants conceive Sin to be expelled at the Point of Death; and, they say, all the Sins of Believers, all the Guilt of Sin, after we are Believers, is pardoned, forgiven and done away by the Death of Christ upon the Cross; we will have it if we can get it. If Men can imagine to find a way into the Kingdom of God, they will have one: They believe that a Man may sin and contract no Guilt; and that he may sin 'till his dying Day, and then all Sin shall pass away, and he shall enter into God's Kingdom. The Papists say none can come to Heaven 'till they be purged from Sin; and they say God hath appointed a place for that purpose, and Persons must go into Purgatory,

and they must lie there till they are purged, and purified, and fitted for Heaven. Now, say the Protestants, truly; There is no such thing, we find no such thing mentioned in the Scripture, therefore such a thing as this cannot be; for the Apostle said, *We have declared to you the whole Counsel of God*, and he speaks not a Word of Purgatory in all the New Testament. The Protestants they have got a way to help themselves, and the Papists to help themselves, and both lie under Danger: As for the Papists, if their Priests mistake, and there be no such Place as Purgatory, then they must be brought back to the Doctrine of the Scriptures; which declares, *That as Death leaves us, so Judgment shall find us; and as we sow so we must reap; if we sow to the flesh, then of the flesh we shall reap Corruption.* Then the Protestants, likewise, if they mistake in saying, A Man may act Sin and yet contract no Guilt, then they must be brought back to the Doctrine of the Scriptures, that tell us; *The Soul that sinneth must die: If a righteous man forsake his righteousness, and doth that which is evil, his righteousness shall be remembered no more, but in the sin that he hath committed, he shall die.*

This is sound Doctrine: I had rather trust the Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles than the Doctrine of them all, either Protestants or Papists; and had rather depend upon their Doctrine for Salvation, that were inspired by the Holy Ghost, than upon those Doctors that say

There

There is no Inspiration now-a-days. Some conceive this Scripture may be interpreted thus and thus; and others conceive it means so and so, but we must (say they) submit to better Judgment: I am a fallible Man, I submit it to better Judgments. Now when People are concerned for Immortality and Eternity, to have such things dished out in such a manner, what Souls are so dull but they would bestir themselves, and consider and look about them before they go hence, how it shall go with them when they are gone?

We are now to work out our own Salvation, that is on our part: None ever have earned out this Salvation, it is wrought out on God's part already, and it is to be made ours; he that is our Saviour, he *hath suffered for our sins, and rose again for our justification; He was made to us, of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.* Now Wisdom signifies the opening of the Counsel of God; Righteousness signifies the Subjection of our Wills to the Will of God; Sanctification signifies Obedience to the Spirit of Christ. Sanctification signifies Obedience to something; to what? what shall we be obedient to? what is our Rule? *He that is led by the Spirit of Christ, he is his; but he that is not led by the Spirit of Christ is none of his;* so that it is plain Sanctification signifies Obedience to the Spirit of Christ, and Redemption signifies buying again, or setting free from Bondage.

We

We know when our Friends are in Captivity, as in *Turkey*, or elsewhere, we pay down our Money for their Redemption; but we will not pay our Money if they be kept in their Fetters still. Would not any one think himself cheated, to pay so much Money for their Redemption, and the Bargain be made so that he shall be said to be redeemed, and be called a redeemed Captive, but he must wear his Fetters still? How long? as long as he hath a day to live.

This is for Bodies; but now I am speaking of Souls, Christ must be made to me Redemption, and rescue me from Captivity. Am I a Prisoner any where? Yes: *Verily, verily, he that committeth Sin, saith Christ, he is a Servant of Sin*, he is a Slave to Sin: If thou hast Sinned thou art a Slave. A Captive that must be redeemed out of Captivity, who will pay a Price for me? I am Poor, I have nothing, I cannot redeem my self, who will pay a Price for me? There is one come that hath paid a Price for me: That is well, that is good News, then I hope I shall come out of my Captivity. What is his Name, is he called a Redeemer? So then I do expect the Benefit of my Redemption, and that I shall go out of my Captivity. No, say they, you must abide in Sin, as long as you live: What benefit then have I by my Redemption? I could have been in Captivity no longer, if I had not been redeemed, I must wear my Shackles and Fetters still, and be subject to my old Master.

Master and Patron, and when he will have me be drunk, I must be drunk; and when he will have me be unclean, I must be unclean.

Thus many profess Christians there be, (you see it with your Eyes) that will tell you they believe all the Articles of the Creed, and they have been Baptized into the Christian Faith, and can rehearse all the Principles of the Christian Religion, and perform the Duty of Christians in going to Church, saying their Prayers, and in giving Alms too it may be; they are such as would be called Christians, they would be called so, yet they *are not Redeemed from their vain Conversations*; for what makes their Shackles and Fetters about them? When their old Master bids them be Drunk, they will be Drunk; and when he bids them commit Whoredom, or Lie, or Cheat their Neighbour, they will do it: You do believe the Devil leads you to this; you will not say the Spirit of God led you to it. If one demand, How did you do it? You say, the Devil prevailed upon me: What, hath the Devil Power over Men after they are Redeemed? What sort of Redemption is this? Then comes in the old Shift again, we are Redeemed from the Punishment of our Sin, but not from the Act of it.

Now if those that are called Ranters had told me this Tale, it had been like them; but when Doctors of Divinity tell us this Tale, it is so unlike Divinity, that it is *Carnal*.

nal, Sensual and Devilish. To tell Believers they are redeemed from the Punishment of Sin, but not from the Act of Sin; that this is the benefit which we receive from Christ's Sufferings; that we may sin on free Cost; that there is no Guilt contracted by it; will any Man or Woman, that understands they have a Soul, venture their Immortal Souls on this Divinity? I hope not. They will not venture their Soul on this Foundation-Doctrine: I hope God will awaken the Consciences of People, that they will not hazard their Souls upon such a carnal, devillish Foundation; that if the Devil should preach, he could not preach a worse Doctrine than this, to perswade Christians they may live in Sin, and Sin will not hurt them, nor impair or break their Peace with God, and Reconciliation with him.

I will tell you how it hath been with me; in my Childhood, if I had spoken a vain Word, or a false Word, I had contracted such a Guilt thereby, that I was ashamed to draw near to God, to pray to him; I knew he would not hear Liars, I knew there was no way to be accepted without Repentance and Amendment of Life. I believe others have met with the same dealing from God, by the secret Strokes of Conviction that have come upon their Hearts, when they have sinned against God.

So that I am still of the Mind, that the Persons that depend upon this kind of Doctrine,
do

do at some times, especially when Sickness comes, and Death looks them in the Face, or in times of common Contagion or Pestilence, at such a time they have a weight of Guilt upon their Consciences; for this Doctrine will not support them at Death, but that then they believe they have contracted Guilt, or committed Sin.

I have wished many times that the Lord would open the Eyes and Hearts of the People of this City and of this Nation, to see how miserably they have ventured their Souls. Will Merchants in this City ever venture their Goods at such a Rate as Men commonly venture their Souls? What, will they venture their Goods in a Ship without a bottom, before she goes to Sea? Now this Doctrine hath not a Foundation; shall I believe a Person that tells me I do not contract Guilt, when I feel it upon my Heart; when I commit Whoredom and Drunkenness, and Cheat my Neighbours, shall any one perswade me that I do not contract Guilt?

O Friends, we are speaking of great Matters; it is about Eternity, that we are speaking, it is about the hazard of Eternal Happiness; therefore, I pray, let every one be serious, and consider what I say, for I speak in God's Name, and on your behalf: Men are to come to a true search in themselves, what a Life it is that they live. Many support themselves by the *Doctrines and Precepts of Men*, and they buoy themselves into Con-
ceits

ceits of Salvation; let them examine whether it be a Life that hath its supportation by the Spirit of God; this is material for every one to consider. There are none can live to God, but by the Life they receive from God; *The grace of God which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men*: Now here is an universal Doctrine.

There are a sort of Men in this City and Nation that tell us, That saving Grace is given only to the Elect. Saving Grace is given to *all Men*; but you must construe those Words, *all the Elect*, where they are somewhat injurious, and would cast off the condition of the Text, if they make a distinction in the latter part of the Sentence, for it will not be good Sense: *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all the Elect, teaching us to deny all Ungodliness, &c.* Here is *Us* taken out of the *All*. The same Grace, that is our Teacher, appears to be the Teacher of others, tho' they *turn it into Lasciviousness*. The Grace is the same, tho' they make many School-distinctions between common and saving Grace. The Apostle explains it, by telling what Grace he means; *The grace of God which bringeth Salvation appeareth to all Men, and that is by teaching us*; What doth it Teach? I pray consider it; it teacheth us, *To deny all Ungodliness and all worldly Lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World*. Where is the Sin now, if a Man be taught by this Grace, and the Dictates of it? Can a Man live in Sin,

Sin, and yet live righteously, soberly and godly too? Can a Man live in Sin, and yet deny all Ungodliness at the same time? Where have Mens Understandings been, that cannot understand their Mother Tongue, and consider sense? Where are Mens Understandings that will say, I may *deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts*, and yet follow the Lusts of my own Heart? You would think I speak Nonsense if I should speak thus; and yet we have been put off with such nonsensical Stuff as this. We must pray to God to send *his holy Spirit into our Hearts, to enable us to live godly, righteous and sober Live*, and at the same time believe that we shall never do it, but that it is a business of Impossibility.

Now when Men come to lay these things together, and when they consider between God and their own Souls, how it is with them, many are amazed to think they should ever be put off with such incongruous disagreeing and dissonant things, that are not consistent with one another.

But do you think it is possible for any Man to live without Sin?

Yes, or else I would say it is impossible for any to be reconciled to God; for God will never be reconciled to Sinners as such; for his Bargain and Covenant is made with such kind of Articles, *Isa. 1. 16. 17. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine Eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do well, &c. Then come and let us reason together,* saith

saith the Lord; tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; tho' they be Red as Crimson, they shall be as Wooll; still these are the Terms, Put away the evil of your doings, then Patience, Mercy and Long Suffering shall be extended to you, God will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he with-hold; what, from those that say their Prayers, or go to the Church or a Meeting? No, but no good thing will he with-hold from them that walk uprightly, Psal. 84. 11. These are the Men.

And when the Lord is distinguishing by his Prophet who he would have among them, he speaks of a sort of People that called upon the Name of the Lord, *Those that feared the Lord, and spake often one to another, that is, of the goodness of God; they were a sort of People that Trembled at the Word of God; a sort of People that did not do as others did, hunt after Pleasures, Riches, and the Honours of the World, but to be acquainted with the inward Word that wrought upon their Hearts; In that Day that I make up my Jewels, they shall be mine, saith the Lord. Whose shall the others be? Thou wilt own these for thine, but whose shall the others be, that think not upon thy Name, and tremble not at thy Word? There is a Place for them too. Tophet is prepared of old, made both wide and large; the Fuel thereof is Fire and Brimstone, and much Wood, and the breath of the Lord kindleth it. This is for all that are Wicked, and that work Iniquity.*

This is in the Old Testament ; then comes the New Testament in *John's Revelations*, there is a separation again : There are a sort of Folk which are called the true Worshippers, and the Angel was commanded to go and measure the Temple, and those that worshipped therein : The outward Temple was not measured, but left for the *Gentiles* to tread in, and left without the measure ; *For without are Dogs and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a Lie.* And then the Lord speaks to his Prophets in the Old Testament again ; *If thou put a difference between the Precious and the Vile, then thou shalt be as my Mouth unto them ; but if thou huddle them altogether, and sow Pillows under their Elbows, then thou shalt be as my Mouth.*

So that in all Ages God aimed at a separation of the state and condition of his People ; and one sort of People were purified, through the sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the Truth ; and another sort were unsanctified and unpurified, and remain'd in their sin ; and the end of Christ's coming into the World, it was to call People to Repentance ; *He came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance,* and to leave off their Sin. To as many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God, to as many as believed on his Name. Whose Sons were the other ? They made as high a rattle of Profession as the other : He tells them who is their Father,

Father, *You are of your Father the Devil*; and he did orderly prove it, and that was thus; That they did the Devils Works, *Ergo*, They were the Devils Children. It was Christ himself, the greatest Doctor of Divinity that ever was in the World, that spake these Words. And this is the manner of Logick whereby he argues with the *Pharisees*, to make them believe that they were the Devils Children: they that do the Devils Works are the Devils Children; but *you do his Works*, therefore you are his Children; so they sought to kill him, they could not bear such Arguments.

If one should go and search out a People in this City and Nation, and see one Man of this Religion, another of that Religion, and pick them out, and use this Argument with them. There is a Man professeth high, he professeth a Light within; if you look upon his Deeds they are dead and dark, why then he is one of the Devils Children: If you put me to prove this, I say he doth the Devils Works; he is an Extortioner, a Deceiver, and a Drunkard and unclean Person, and doth the Devil's Works, and so is none of Gods Children. And so go to another sort and use this Argument, it is safe enough, you can never fail in this kind of Argument which Christ used; and if People would use it with themselves, and think themselves no better, then we should have People confess themselves the Devil's Children.

None come to be Gods Children till the
con

come to acknowledge their lost estate, their deplorable condition; that they are fallen from God, and through Sin and Iniquity are got into a nature that is at enmity with God, then they will cry out, *who shall deliver me from this body of death*, and Childship of Satan, this Heirship of Wrath? I am an Heir of an Inheritance, I am an Heir of Wrath, and I would not lose my Inheritance and Heirship, and have an *Inheritance with the Saints in light*; we shall never know this till we come to Divinity without Sophistry, and without Tricks and Quirks, and come to Christ's Reasoning. He that doth the Devil's Works is the Devil's Child; then they will confess this is of the Devil, and the other is of the Devil: This is an evil Work, and I see that I had need be brought into another condition.

When People come to an Acknowledgment of the Truth, and of their own Condemnation, then they are one Step towards Redemption and Salvation: No one ever took one step towards their Salvation, till they acknowledged their own Condemnation. *He that sanctifies, and they that are sanctified, are all of one, and they that are joyned to the Lord are one Spirit: An evil Tree, saith Christ, cannot bring forth good Fruit.* When Christ spake this, he spake it to Men and Women, and he spake it of Men and Women, and not of Trees: And when he said, *No Man can gather Grapes of Thorns, nor Figs of Thistles*, he speaks of a Generation of Men; as if he had said,

said, this Thorn must be translated and changed into another nature before it can bring forth Grapes; and this Thistle must be changed into another nature before it bring forth Figs.

There must be a Change in the Nature of Man before there can be a Change of the Fruit and Effect of his Doings; *Whatsoever he sows that he shall also reap; whatsoever a Man doth in the Body, he must give an account thereof at the Day of Judgment; for the Books will be opened, and Men judged according to the things written in those Books.* If there be a Book for thee and me, i'll warrant thee there is a great deal in it; there is a Recorder and a Clerk for the Book, which God hath opened in every Man's Conscience; and there is set down every Man's Transgressions and his Sins: Saith one, *Thou hast written my Transgressions as with the point of a Diamond; thou hast ingraven it so deep, that it seems impossible that it should ever be blotted out again.* Some have had their Sins so deeply ingraven in their Conscience, that they have thought they would never be blotted out, they were written as with the Pen of a Diamond.

When People see and consider that they have ventured their Souls upon such slight Grounds, I hope they will be awaked to seek after Righteousness; when they see there is nothing good in them: Where there is any thing good it is God that hath given it to them. Some will say, If I be perverse, corrupt

and corrupt and wicked, I cannot help it, therefore
 must be beholden to my Maker to help
 me, else I must never be helped. Now, be-
 cause God knows that we are helpless, *he*
hath laid help upon one that is mighty, that is,
 our Lord Jesus Christ; and Christ *hath sent*
forth his spirit into the world to convince the
world of Sin, and to lead his People into all
Truth: And this Grace that comes by Jesus
 Christ hath been so universally shewed, and
 so universally extended to all Men, that I ne-
 ver met with a Man yet that had none of it :
 But let them be as bad and as dark as they
 could, yet the Light of Christ shined in that
 Darknes, into the darkeſt Heart that ever I
 met with in all my Life: He sheweth Men,
 That *his light shineth in darknes, and the dark-*
nes cannot comprehend it.

Therefore the Work that God hath set us
 about, and the Service which he requires at
 the Hands of many of us, is to turn Men
 from their own Darknes unto the Light of
 Christ their Saviour, and from the Devil's
 Power, that hath enslaved them, to the Power
 of God that can redeem them; and yet we
 are far enough from that which they call *Free*
Will, we are far enough from this. We say
 Man can never be saved till he learn to deny
 his own Will; it is God's Will *that every one*
should be saved: But some will not be saved,
 they will keep their Wills and not resign them
 up to God; they have a Free-will to go to
 Destruction. As for Salvation, if they will
 obtain

obtain it, they must part with their own Wills, and they must take a Yoke and Burthen upon them, before they can be saved: If People can have their Wills, they will not take Christ's Yoke upon them: He that will be Christ's Disciple must deny his own Will and take up his daily Cross: These are the Terms of the Gospel.

But you will say, No Man, by all the Power he hath can redeem himself, and no Man can live without Sin.

We will say Amen to it: But if Men tell us, That when God's Power comes to help us, and to redeem us out of Sin, that it cannot be effected, then this Doctrine we cannot away with; nor I hope you neither. Would you like it well if I should tell you, That God puts forth his Power to do such a thing, but the Devil hinders him? That it is impossible for God to do it, because the Devil doth not like it? That it is impossible that any one should be free from sin, because the Devil hath got such a Power in them, that God cannot cast it out.

This is lamentable Doctrine; hath not this been preached, this Doctrine of Impossibility of living without Sin? It doth in plain Terms say, Though God doth interpose his Power it is impossible, because the Devil hath so rooted Sin in the Nature of Man. Is not Man God's Creature, and cannot he new make him, and cast Sin out of him? If you say Sin is rooted deeply in Man, I say so too;

yet

yet not so deeply rooted but Christ Jesus is entered so deeply into the Root of the Nature of Man, that he hath received Power to destroy the Devil and his Works, and to recover and Redeem Man into his Primitive Nature of Righteousness and Holiness ; or else that is false, That he is able to save, to the utmost, all that come unto God by him. We must throw away the Bible, if we say that it is impossible for God to deliver Man out of Sin: Is not Christ entered into the root of our Nature? And hath he not taken upon him the Seed of Abraham, after the Flesh? Is he not entered into the Root of all Men's Natures, and tasted death for every man, that he might quicken every one that is dead in sins and trespasses? All these things speak the Love of God to Mankind, in order to their Salvation.

Much might be said to these things, these Clouds of Error and Darkness that have overspread the Nation ; yet, this I say, if one were to speak of it never so long, it must be by the Eye that God gives you, that you must see it ; it is he that opens the Hearts of Men as he did *Lydia's* : If there had not been the Power of God that reached her Heart, *Paul* could not have opened it.

When all is said that can be said, the Counsel of God which hath sounded in your Ears, is recommended to you, that every one may retire in quietness and stillness of Mind to wait for the feeling of that quickning Power

of the Spirit of Christ that is sent into the Hearts of Men; that that may open your Eyes to see your present state; then you will see a better state, a further state, and when you see with your inward Eye that your state is not so good as you would have it to be, then trust and rely upon the all-sufficient and powerful Operation of God's Holy Spirit to mend your state and give you Power over your Corruptions, and to go on from one step to another, towards the Cleansing and Sanctification of your Souls, so that you may receive something from God to enable you to live to God; for all that you receive from Men will only make you live to Men, but that which you receive from God, will help you to live to God; that will purifie you and sanctifie you, *and make you clean through the word*: So through the Word you will come to Cleanness, Purity and Holiness: And when you are come to the way of Holiness, you may believe you are gotten into the way of God's Kingdom, and never till then.

It is not enough to make a Profession, but we must live up to the Profession of that Religion that we make; it is not holding this Tenet and the other Tenet, and saying, This Minister, I am sure, preacheth the Truth, thou mayest be a Child of the Devil for all that. I now speak indifferently to all People, without respect to any sort: They that believe they are walking toward the Kingdom of God, and yet their way is not a holy way, they

they have cheated themselves, & deceiv'd their own Souls, and they had need look about them and take heed what they do; the Glafs is running, and Time is hasting away, and our Life may end we know not how soon. It is good to prize and improve Time, while you have it, and bring your Deeds to the Light; see what Reproofs, Instructions, Counsels and Openings you have met with from the Lord, and see how you have answered and been obedient to them, and so you will come to take a sound and infallible account of your Condition; and if it be not so good as it should be, wait upon the Lord to mend it; he that made you can mend you, he that made your Ears, must unstop your Ears to hear the Word of God.

To that Power that carries on the work of Sanctification and Redemption by his word, to that word I must leave you, and to his Spirit I commit you. This word will be with you, and if you part not with it, it will not part with you; it will go with you to your Houses, and to your Shops, and to your Beds; it will lie down with you at Night, and rise with you in the Morning: To that end, Christ he is a Leader and Governour, and the Captain of our Salvation, to lead the Van, and carry you on in the way of Salvation; and as many as follow Christ, and are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Children of God.

Sermon VII.

The Sheep of Christ hear his
Voice.

*Preach'd at Devonshire-House, May the
10th, 1688.*

*My Sheep (saith the true Shepherd) hear
my Voice.*

THE Sheep of the true Fold hear the Voice of Christ, the good Shepherd, and know the Voice of Strangers too: But, saith he, *the Stranger they will not follow.* This Scripture hath been a Mark of Distinction in all Ages, that hath been peculiarly bestowed upon the People of God, that they have had a discerning Knowledge to make a certain Distinction between them that were of God, and those that were of the World: *Now they that are of God hear us,* saith the Apostle.

Now, that you may all find in your selves this peculiar Gift of God, to be able to understand and discern between the precious and the vile, that you might know the Ministration of Life from the Ministration of Death you must all be gathered inwardly into that

which

which you have received of God; for they that are only exercised with Gifts and Parts, and Acquirements that appertain to this world, they have been always subject to Delusions, apt to be led away into a By-path and Crooked-way, *that leads to destruction*: But they that are under the Government and Direction of the Gift of God, they have been able thereby to make such a Distinction of Voices, and of Sounds, that they have been preserv'd from the Delusions of the Age.

This was the Difference of old between the Prophets of God and the false Prophets, between the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the false Apostles; the Difference was not so much in their Words, for they had in a great measure the same Words; if the true Prophets used to say, *Thus saith the Lord*, the false Prophets would say so too; if the true Prophets declared against Sin, the false Prophets likewise would do so; for the false Prophet stole his Word from his Neighbour: But the greater Matter by which the People of the Lord were preserved, was, that hidden and divine Wisdom they received of God, by which they understood the Voice of the Spirit from the Voice of Strangers, from the Voice of them that were of the Flesh; and that was the Cause that the Christians in the Primitive Days did not adhere to, and follow those false Apostles that came to them in their own Names, and held *a form of Godliness, but denied the Power of it.*

But they among them in whom their witchcrafts did enter, they went away from the Spirit, and sought to be *made perfect in the flesh*; they went to the outward observation, and to the *beggarly rudiments of things that perish with their using*, and from the *Law of the spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*.

And as it hath been in those Ages of which we have read, so it comes to pass in this our Age, in which a dispensation of the Spirit of Truth is manifested and revealed unto the Children of Men; there is a Remnant that have received the Testimony of Eternal Life, and have believed the Testimony, and waited on him of whom the Testimony is born, not to have Life by the Testimony, but *to have Life in him*; so they receive their Life by the ministration of the Spirit of Christ, and they live to God, and others who have received no Life from him, but have a Life in the Words, and Sounds, and Noises and Terms, and distinguishing phrases of things, their Life lies there, they live not to God but to themselves, their glorying is not *in the Cross of Christ*, but in the Words and outside of things; so that every own had need, at such a time as this, to approve their Hearts unto the Lord; who knows the inside of Peoples Profession, the inside of their Religion, that knows how the Heart is concerned towards God, and what they say and do upon the account of his Service, so that all that are met together might come to receive more and more of the Life
and

and Vertue that sanctifies the Soul of him that receiveth it.

For alas! my Friends, it is not the gathering together of the most excellent Words about Religion, and about Worship and Service, which will approve any Man in the sight of God; that is but the painting of a Sepulchre, and covering the Rottenness that is in many; but the Lord sees into the inside of every Professor, and whosoever *names the Name of Christ and departeth not from Iniquity*, they do but take his Name in vain, and contract a guilt upon their own Souls; so that every one that seemeth to be Religious, ought to enquire whence their Profession springs; if it springs from a real Possession of a measure of that which sanctifies the Life, and shews it self forth, in its working and Operation many times abundantly more than it doth in Word and Profession; It manifesteth it self in Holiness and Righteousness, to the Honour of God; it's the aim and design of all such to exalt the Name of him whom they profess by Holiness and Righteousness shining forth in their Works, for it will never shine through Words alone; many good Words may be spoken yet God not glorified, but his Name may be dishonoured by them; but whosoever comes to feel that which is Life in themselves, they know what will Honour God, they feel the Birth Immortal that is of God, of his own begetting by the Word of Truth.

This living Birth is that which brings forth living Praises ; the other is but Flesh, *that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh*, and it glorifies the Flesh, and when the Flesh is most of all glorified, most of all exalted, it is then but *as the Flower of the Field*, it is then cut down and withered ; the *Sun of Righteousness* shines with the Beams of the Everlasting Glory of God, and causeth it to wither and come to naught.

So Friends, let your minds be gathered inward, that you may be able in your own selves, by Virtue of the divine Gift of God, to distinguish between the Voice of the true Shepherd, and the Voice of a Stranger, so that your minds may not follow a strange Voice, that you may follow the Lord with your whole Heart, *with a full purpose of Heart* ; for there is a **real Word** of Prophecy discovered in the inward Parts, which doth *Distinguish between the Precious and the Vile* in every one's particular ; and that which is precious in one, it answereth to that which is precious in another ; and that which is vile in one, it answereth to that which is vile in another.

For there is an inward and secret *mystery of iniquity*, as well as a Mystery of Godliness. *The mystery of Godliness* is when God is manifested in the flesh ; the *Mystery of Iniquity* is, when the wicked One is making himself manifest, and appears and discovers himself in the Flesh, that he may rise up and glory in the Flesh.

Now

Now the Eternal Truth which never changeth, that is it which giveth a discerning; this hath always put a difference between the true and the false Prophets, and true and the false Apostles, between the true and the false Ministers; the difference hath not been so much *in words as in power*, as the Apostle speaks concerning some in his Days that had endeavoured to deceive and draw Men aside from the *Simplicity of the Gospel*, when I come (saith he) *I will know*; now their Words were not so much taken notice of what they said, whether their Words be true or no: I will not know their Words but their Power. How should he know their Power if he were not in the Power himself? Now this divine Power, as every one acquaints himself with it, it worketh unto the Sanctification of them, when they have fellowship with the stirrings and movings of all others that are Partakers of it: this is that which will establish and confirm your Minds in the true Faith and Simplicity of the Truth, that you turn not aside to the right Hand or to the left. If you have regard to the Principle of Divine Truth that you have received from God, then you can receive Confirmation from any one that hath a Measure according to it. There is a *measuring line*, and the *Reed of the Sanctuary*, that *measurcth the Temple and all that dwell therein*, that measures them with one Reed and one Measure, and every one answereth to that Measure, according to the stature and degree of growth of the Grace of God they

arrive to; and now they are come to a fixed Foundation.

Others there are in the World, that have laid their Foundation upon this creaturely help, and the other creaturely help, upon this Man, and the other Man; but now true Christians, they come to have their foundation, their rooting and building upon Christ Jesus, upon that Word of Life that first of all gathered their Minds into a desire after Holiness, into a desire after Acquaintance with God that made them.

You that are true Christians can remember, how you were begotten, and that which did beget you; that Word of God that is incorruptible, that is immortal, that was not of a dying quality, that need not be supported by this, and that, and the other means, but it hath its support in it self, it hath its nourishment in it self, and it grows up in it self, and every one that receiveth it they grow up in it, until they come more and more to partake of the Life and Qualities of it; *that as he is, so they may be in the present World.*

But, alas, this is never known, but where the Word of God hath its free passage: Many have *tasted of this Word of God*, and by tasting of it, have been acquainted with the *Power of the World to come*; they knew well enough the Power that would bring forth another World, *A new Heaven, and a new Earth, and Righteousness in it*; many have felt the *Power that have never continued to see the working*

working of it, never continued to see and witness what this Power would work ; going aside from the Power of the World that was to come, they have never seen the coming of it, but *their foolish Hearts have been darkned again, and their Imagination have grown vain,* and they have conceived to themselves a false Liberty to the Flesh, and their Wills have been strong, and have prevail'd over them ; that tho' they had tasted of the Powers that did belong to the World to come, they never saw the working and operation of that Power to bring to pass that which by sight and vision they did behold.

Therefore, it is needful for every one of you, in every state and condition that the Lord hath brought you into, to keep yourselves in a deep Humility ; to know the Afflictions, Temptations and Trials you are under, and to exercise your Minds, not only on what you have got over (for when some come to look at what Sufferings and Difficulties they have got over, they are apt to be exalted above measure, and lifted up in their Minds) but let every one know the state and condition in which at present they are labouring ; let every one consider what is their present state and work ; their help lies in that condition : Some have always a Foundation of their Faith present with them, that they may feel the object of their Faith where they hope for Help, where they hope for Comfort and Strengthening to be present with them.

Now

Now every one that believeth in the Word of God, their care is that they may know this Word of God, that they may hear it, feel it, and behold the Beauty of it under the Exercises of it; how it conducts and leads, how it counselleth and adviseth, that so in all things they are to pass through, they may not be as those that have run into it; as those that do this and that of their own Wills, but may be properly Followers of something.

I go into this, or that or the other thing, not to do mine own Will, not that I run into it, but I am led into it; my Leader goes before me, the Word of God, that hath conducted me and led me: I am a Follower of God in all his Dispensations, and in all his Leadings and Guidings; I am to follow him, for he teacheth me his way, he instructeth me in the true way: The best of all his Scholars and Disciples, they are to be led and guided into that Work and Service they are to do, that they may run into no Irregularity or Absurdity, for he will lead them into Holiness, Righteousness and Humility, where all become the Servants of God in Christ Jesus, and Servants to one another: There is a mutual Concord and Harmony in the Work of this Spirit, in the Service of this Power, where every one finds what they are appointed and directed to, and all the Members of the Body of Christ know they ought not to be disjointed and rent, and separated one from another, but *tyed together in Joints and Bands, to edifie one another*

ther in the Love of God; so that here is one Spirit that hath been the Guide of this one People in all Ages.

Many People have been guided by many Guides, and they have been scattered, divided and separated one from another, and have been under this, that, and the other Name; but all God's People have been guided by the Spirit of Christ, that universal Spirit that is one with God. In the Old Testament times, and the New Testament times, they were all led by the universal Spirit of Christ, and they were of one Heart, and of one Mind, serving the Lord; there was a Concord and Unity among them; and if at any time any Discord or Division happened, it was because the roaring Lion that goes about continually seeking whom he may devour, had found some or other that he might devour, and draw into his Snares and Gins; for there are some that he may, and some that he may not. Who are they that this roaring Lion may destroy? The Devil knows who those are that he may prevail upon; he knows that those which are in the Hands of God are out of his reach; My Father, saith Christ, is greater than all, and none shall pluck them out of my Fathers hands; yet doubtless those that are in the Father's Hands are tempted and tried, the roaring Lion goes about seeking to devour them if he might; a Man that he devours, he swallows up with Prejudice, Enmity, Covetousness and Pride, and he will lead him into any evil thing;

thing; he hath many Gulphs to swallow Men up into, but if he meet with one that is kept in Gods Hands, he knows such an one is out of his reach, and he is not able to catch him.

If he meet with a Man that he can prevail over, as he did over our Father *Adam* and Mother *Eve*, that are in their own Hands, that stand upon their Wit and Parts, and Knowledge and Eloquence; those that stand upon these things as their Foundation, they are in their own keeping; these are they whom he may devour and catch, and ensnare in one or other of his Gins, and swallow them up in one of his Gulphs and Temptations: But seeing God hath opened and manifested these things by his Spirit, and seeing the secret Wiles of *Satan* are discover'd and made known by the shining of his Light, how ought every one that is a Believer of the Truth, to depend upon God for his Protection, and be careful that he goes not out of his Father's Hands, that he never trust himself to his own keeping for his Security and Preservation, lest he meet with a Temptation that may swallow him and devour him.

I remember our Lord Jesus Christ when he was upon Earth, he put his Disciples in mind of what happened long before, *Remember Lot's Wife*: You may take notice of her, the Power of God took hold of her and brought her out of *Sodom*, and was leading her to a place of safety, but she had something of *Adam's* Apostacy,

Apostacy in her Nature, she looked back, and was turned into a Pillar of Salt. Our Saviour was pleased to make use of this Passage that happened some hundreds of Years before, to shew how she faild of coming to the place of safety, tho' she was led out of *Sodom* by the Hands of one of the Angels of God: O remember her, she was turned into a Pillar of Salt, and remains so to this day.

If we remember where our Safety is, and from whose Hands we must expect it, we need not go to look at *Lot's Wife*. We have seen many in our Days that have stood fair for Redemption, they have had a Power revealed to them, that is able to redeem them, and save them to the uttermost; but afterward by exalting themselves above this Power, and taking the Government of themselves into their own Hands, they have robbed God of his Glory, and he hath withdrawn himself from them, and then is was with them as with *Saul*, when the Lord departed from him, *The evil Spirit entred into him.*

We have before our Eyes from day to day, those that have known the beginning of the Redemption of God's Power, and have been in a great measure brought out of *Sodom*, and out of the way of *Egypt*, and they have had opened to them *the Mystery of the Kingdom of God* for their Encouragement, but at last they have taken and arrogated those Gifts to themselves, and looking upon themselves as far excelling others, magnifying their Parts as if they*

they were their own, when they were the Gifts of God. Then the Lord hath left them to let them see whether they could stand of themselves, and they have fallen, and been taken in the Gins and Snares of the Devil, *who like a roaring Lion going about continually seeking whom he may devour.*

Now, my Friends, it greatly concerns us all to know what Refuge we have to fly to in a time of Trial; we have a time of Trial now, tho' not a time of External Suffering and Persecution, and enduring Hardship yet upon us, to try our Faith and Trust in God; yet we have no reason to be secure, careless nor remiss in our present Duty, *nor to put the evil day far from us*, but to be in the exercise of Humility and Watchfulness as becomes Christians; for there is now as much Danger and Peril in this time of Liberty and Tranquility, as there was before.

If any one in the time of Persecution and Suffering hath said within himself, I had better give over and part with the Truth, and forsake the ways of the Lord, and give over my Testimony for his Name, for I shall be undone and ruined in the World; this Man by his carnal Fears hath lost his Testimony.

So likewise if a Man in this time of Liberty and freedom of serving the Lord, and bearing Testimony to his Name, if he shall not entirely trust in the Lord, to carry him on in his Work and Service, and continue his dependance upon him, and wait for the Assistance

ance of the Holy Spirit of God to work in him *to will and to do of his good Pleasure*, this Man shall lose his Testimony as well as the other: Therefore, let every one of you keep up a Dependance upon God's Holy Spirit for carrying on the Work which he hath begun in your Souls; consider what Work it is that Christ is now at in every one of you; I know what his Work was when I was first Convinced, he was burning up and hewing down every thing that hindred his carrying on the Work of Sanctification and Redemption, and Setledness and Stability in the Covenant of Life and Peace.

So that our meeting together ought to be in the Name of Christ; I hope it is so with most of you: I hope it is not to see and hear what this or that Man saith, but to know within your selves what part of the Work of Redemption the Lord Jesus Christ is carrying on, that you may join with him, and be a *willing People in the Day of his Power*, and say as Paul, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* If thou wilt have me part with my all, Lord here it is, I offer it up; and if thou wilt have any Service done, Lord here I am, *Speak, for thy Servant heareth*; let there be in every one of you an Attentiveness, and an humble waiting upon the Lord, and say as the Psalmist, *Behold, as the Eyes of Servants look unto the hands of their Masters, and as the Eyes of a Maiden unto the hands of her Mistress, so our Eyes wait upon the Lord our God until he have mercy upon us.* When

When ever a Christian hath his dependance upon God's Wisdom and Power, such an one shall never want Wisdom, the Lord will give him Wisdom to preserve him against all the Wiles of Satan; and he shall never want Power, for the Lord will enable him to fulfil and perform what he requireth of him; he shall be replenished with Judgment and Understanding, Ability and Power, to direct him into the good ways of God, and to enable him to walk in them.

It is the earnest desire of my Soul that every one of you may be exercised in those things which are profitable for you, and which may be comfortable to your Friends and Brethren; that you may all grow up into a stability and steadfastness in the good ways of the Lord, that you may not be shaken and tossed with every Storm and Tempest; that when there comes a time for the trial of your Patience, and Fortitude and Courage, you may not be tossed to and fro like Children, but *be steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord*, that so living in all holy Obedience and patience continuing in well-doing, you may have a constant Supply of Strength and Power from God ministred unto you by his Holy Spirit.

Sermon

Sermon VIII.

No true Worship without the
right Knowledge of God.

Preached at Grace-Church Street, May 24
1688.

My Friends,

THere is no Man can truly worship God 'till
he comes to a measure of certain Know-
ledge of him; for all the Worship in the
World where the Vail of Ignorance still pre-
vails upon the Mind, is all abominable; there
is no acceptance with God: There must be a
Knowledge of God before there can be a true
Worshipping of him; for they that worship be-
fore they know God, *they worship they know
not what*; they worship a God they have heard
of, but do not know; so every one that
would be a true Worshipper, must first come
to that which giveth a true Knowledge, that
raiseth up a Certainty in the Mind, *This is the
Lord, we will trust in him; this is our God, and
we will serve him.*

And that all People might come to this cer-
tainty of Knowledge, therefore it is that God
hath sent forth his Spirit, that the things of
God

God might be communicated by the Spirit of God, for without the Assistance of this Spirit Men seek after the Knowledge of God in vain; If they seek after the Knowledge of God, they cannot find it, and if they seek after the Worship of God, and after Acceptance with God, they cannot find it; so that all Religion and religious Performances that People are exercised in, where the Spirit of Truth hath not the beginning, they will all prove fruitless in the end.

There be wise Men in the World, and they have imployed their Wisdom to find out the true God; but God in Wisdom hath ordained, that the World by all their Wisdom shall not know him; so there is an end of all their Labour: How shall they know him then? *As none can know the things of a man save the spirit of a man that is in him, so none can know the things of God but the spirit of God;* so that they that resist the Guidance, Direction and Counsel of the Spirit of God, are like unto those that would enter into a House or Pallace, and remember not the Door that leads into it.

People would fain come into the Divine Knowledge and into the Understanding of Divine Mysteries, but they would come by it another way; they would study for it, they would learn it by Arts and Sciences, they would attain it by their own Industry; and herein they labour to excel one another. If there comes a Man among them that tells them,

them, Friends you are all out of the way, then they are angry, and instead of enquiring what is the way, they are angry that their way must be rejected. Friends, you will never come to the Knowledge of God but by the Spirit of God; then they mock, and then they scoff and scorn the Doctrine of the Spirit, for the Teaching of the Spirit hath been the common Scorn and Derision of our Age.

It is so in our Day with many; if they cannot come to the Knowledge of God any other way but by the Spirit, they would deny to make use of that, to be subject to that, and these put their Trust in their own Power and Industry, to find out the Mystery of the Knowledge of God; *so they are ever learning, but are never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth: How should they?* How can a People come to the Knowledge of the Truth, without the *spirit of truth that reveals it?* Can any come to the Knowledge of Christ unless *he that sent him reveals him?* Where are People's Books? where are their Bibles? where is their Rule (they call it so) that all their Endeavours for many Ages have proved fruitless in respect of the Knowledge of God?

This is but your say so (may some say:) How doth it appear that we have not attained to the true Knowledge of God and to the true Worship, and to the true Religion?

I wil

I will tell you how it appears, for all in all Ages that have attained to the Knowledge of God, they have been *made partakers of his divine nature* and his Divine Qualities; they have brought forth a sort of Fruit in their Lives and Conversations, that hath been of the same Nature, it hath been Holy and Divine: They have known the Sanctifier, and they have been a sanctified People, so they have become one with him, and have shewn forth the Beauty of Holiness in their Lives, that is a Demonstration that may shew the Knowledge of God, for without it they live another Life, an Unholy one, a corrupt one, a Life of Self-love, a Life of Pride, Vanity and Enmity, and that they never had from God, but from another Root; a Life of Iniquity and Sin, it came from another Seed; so that they are still without the Knowledge of God.

And again, all that have come to the Knowledge of God, they have trusted in him; that People cannot do now-a-days, except here and there a few that do know him; the generality of the Age they cannot trust God; they must have something else to rely upon, and trust to, for in him they cannot trust. Now the Lord said by the Prophet of old, *They that know my Name will trust in me*; that is enough if People know God, *whom to know is eternal life, even to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*: This is Life Eternal; if People were come

to this Divine Knowledge they would never take care or study for any Refuge, or set up this, or that, or the other thing to lean upon. A rich Man he trusteth in his Riches, one trusteth to one thing and another to another, but they would trust in the Living God, and he should be their God and their Rock, and they would venture their Concerns upon him both in this World and that which is to come, if they but know him. People may talk as much as they will, but he can never properly said to be my God and thy God, 'till we cast our care upon him, and can venture our Concerns upon him both in this World and that which is to come, and can say, He is our God, and our Reliance and Dependence is upon him.

Now this is the Effect and Consequence of this Knowledge of God; such as come to partake of it, they shall not need to be bid to worship him: You shall not need to make a Law that this People shall worship the God that they know; there needs no Law to command the People of God to worship him; his *law is written in their hearts*, and they that know him will worship him. There was never any Man on Earth that had the Knowledge of the true and living God, that needed be put upon worshipping him, that needed a Law to oblige him to it; for the very Knowledge that is given of God through Christ, this brings forth naturally an Adoration of the invisible Power which Men put their

their Trust in ; it produceth an Adoration that is true Worship ; it causeth an humble Reverence of that Power ; it brings the Soul upon its Knees, as it were ; it brings the Soul to stoop and bend, and bow upon all occasions to God, as his God : It raiseth his expectations to receive Counsel, and Judgment, and Understandings from him, as the Fountain of Wisdom ; and hereby People are taught to worship in the right Divine Knowledge.

But to tell Men of the Worship of God before they know him ; though you make as many Laws as you will to force him to worship that God they do not know, yet you can never do them any good, nor make their Worship acceptable, nor make them devout ; you can never bring Devotion nor Divine Adoration into their Hearts by all the Laws that you can make.

But there is a Spirit of Life that sets the Soul at Liberty from its former Bondage to Sin and Satan ; and when this Law comes to be revealed in my Heart, what saith this Law ? Worship God, give Honour and Glory to him. This Law saith, Submit thy self to him that redeemed thee, thou art his, thou art no more thine own ; This Law being written in the Heart obligeth a Man to a true Worship, and to *worship God in spirit and truth*, for this Man hath done imagining among the Heathen, that there are Gods many and Lords many : He hath done imagining what God is, and where

he is, for he is now come to Knowledge; he is come beyond the best Scholar in *Athens*, let him be never so mean and despicable in the World; if it be never so poor a Lad or Lass, they are beyond the best Scholar in *Athens*; for the best Scholar there came only so far as to contradict their fellow Scholars: Some of them were for *Mars*, and some for *Jupiter*, some for one God and some for another: These Scholars, by some Beam of Divine Light shining in them, had come to perceive that the Influences that were in *Mars*, *Jupiter* and *Venus*, and the *Sun* and *Moon*, and other Planets, they received them from an higher Power, that is, God. They denied not that these Planets had Power and Influences given to them; sometimes they are called Heavenly Bodies; the Sky or Canopy of the Earth; and Sun, Moon and Stars are called heavenly Bodies, they have Power and Influences; but this was given them, and that Power must be greater than theirs from whom they receive their Power, Vertue and Influence, even that God who is the Maker of all things. The Scholars at *Athens* were gotten so far, as to see there was a God greater than the Planets which the Nations worshipped; they thought that God was to have an Altar as well as *Jupiter* and *Mars*, and those other Gods, and therefore they built an Altar to the unknown God, whom they ignorantly worshipped.

If thou and I are come to the Knowledge of the true God, then we must know more than these Scholars of *Athens*, who erected an Altar to the unknown God: When the Apostles comes to Preach Divinity among these Scholars of *Athens*, there were Masters of Arts and Sciences; he begins to Preach to them about an unknown, God whom ye ignorantly worship, saith he, him declare I unto you; we do not need to declare to you the Gods of the Nations, for you worship them, but to declare to you the unknown God whom ye ignorantly worship; these were the great Scholars of *Athens* that the Apostle spake to: What dost thou declare of God? He is the God that made the World and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and Earth, and dwelleth not in Temples made with hands, neither is Worshipped with Mens Hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all Life and Breath, and all things, and hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men to dwell upon the Face of the Earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their Habitations that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, move and have our being; for as certain also of your own Poets have said, for we are also his offspring; for as much then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto Gold, or Silver, or Stone Graven by Art and Man's device.

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Here is a way of Learning, you need not turn over Books any more; if I would know the true God, I must know who gave me Life and Motion, and who created me, he is not far from me; and how should I find the Knowledge of him? *Feel after him, if haply you may find him, for he is not far from any of us; in him we live, and move and have our being; we cannot live without him one Moment; he giveth Life, Essence and Power to all Creatures in Heaven and Earth; we must have him with us or we cannot live; I die as soon as my Life departs from me, so do you; if my Breath and Life continue with me, it is by the Power of him that giveth it, in whom I live, and move and have my being; still it is in him that first gave it.*

Here all the great Scholars and Philosophers were counselled to feel after him; so are all People now-a-days; this is our Business, when we go to preach the knowledge of God to them that want it, our Commission runs not that we must read such a Book, such an Author, and turn over such a Leaf, and there you shall have a Discovery and a fair Demonstration of the Attributes of God, of his Wisdom, Power, Goodness and Mercy, Omnipotence, Omniscience; our Commission runs not that way, but our Commission runs thus, that we *turn People from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God; to turn their Minds from that which may hinder the Knowledge of Christ, from Darkness, Blindness and Ignorance;*

God is not far from them; perhaps they might find him, if they did feel after him.

There are a sort of Men now-a-days, (such as were in former times) that *say unto God, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,* such a sort of People are dark, and blind and ignorant, and are like to continue so, that say to God depart from us; God is come to them, but they bid him depart from them: We are sent to these People that are dark and ignorant, and have not the true Knowledge of God, though they have abundant of notions, hear-say knowledge, learning and speculation; our business is to convince them of their Ignorance, *and to turn them from Darknes to Light.*

There are a People that have mocked and scoffed at us many Years, what (say they) is there a Light within? must we go to the Light within? Hath every body a Light within?

Yes I believe so, and you must believe so too if you will believe the Scriptures. *Christ is the true Light,* and he hath *lighted every Man that cometh into the World.* If he did light them, how did he do it? I will tell you, (say they) he spake a great many gracious Words, and some body hath writ them down. What, will this prove the Light within? Because we have got a new Testament, and Christ hath spoken a great many gracious Words, and they are written down and recorded, doth this prove the Light within? No, People might have been in Darknes still for all the Books of the

the New Testament, and the Old Testament too; and for all the Books in the World; for they would never have conveyed light into the Hearts and Consciences of Men if God had not placed it there.

Indeed these Books may be Instrumental, and God doth make use of them as a means for the conveying of Light and Grace, and working of true Conversion; but the holy Scriptures cannot do it of themselves, unless there be a co-acting and co-operation of the Spirit of Christ with them; without this Spirit they cannot convey saving Light to us: How prove you then a Light within? The Apostle tells you, if you will believe him, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *God who commandeth the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined into our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ;* so that every one that retireth into himself, will know quickly and understand his Error, and confess that there is a Light within, and that by this Rule because there is something in the Heart, that makes manifest that which is reprovab; if they do or say a thing reprovab, that which manifesteth a thing is Light; that which manifesteth dark Words or Works is Light.

Now when they have found this *Light within*, the next Question in Controversie is, whether this will give Men sufficient Light for the true Knowledge of God, whether this be sufficient to bring a Man to Life and to Salvation?

I am of that judgment that it is sufficient; and I believe it heartily, and preach it boldly in the name of the Lord, that the Light that shines in your Hearts shines there to give you the true knowledge of God in the Face of the Mediator the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot believe this, you will say, for you have had this ever since you was a Child, and you know not the least good it hath done you; all our learned Men and Ministers, go to what sort you will, they speak very slightly of it; this Light within it is nothing but natural conscience, a poor Light, it is but an *Ignis Fatuus*, that will mislead us. But let me tell thee the reason why it doth thee no more good, is, because thou hast been loose and wanton, and vain, and wouldst not receive the reproofs of it; reckon but up the time, and call to Mind, when thou didst receive the reproofs of it, then it did thee some good, and brought thee to remorse, and brought anguish and sorrow and trouble into thy Mind, and brought thee to a right sense of what evil thou hast done; but if thou didst not regard it, no wonder it did thee no good; its reproofs and counsels were like the Seed sown by the high way; *the Fowls of the Air gathered it up*, and it did no good, that is, the Devil plucked it up, and then thy Soul lay as Seed that brought forth no Fruit to God, and the Devil might have what he would.

I will tell you the reason why so many Learned Men, Men of great abilities speak
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so slightly and meanly of it, because it hath done them no good inward nor outward that they know of: How should it do you good when it hath done them none? The reason why it doth them no good, is because they do not believe in it; and did Christ ever do any Body good that did not believe in him? *He gave Men power indeed to become the Sons of God,* the greatest good that they are capable of; but it was *to those that believed on his name*: Were all they the Sons of God that heard Christ preach? No, some were the Devil's Sons; our Saviour tells them, that they were of *their Father the Devil, and his Works they did do*; they came to Meetings and heard Christ preach; he discoursed to them, but it did them no good, for they did not believe on his Name.

And then it appears in the next place, that if this Light be taken heed to, and if Men come to be taught by it and receive instructions, they would then have it all for nothing, they would have it all for God's sake; all the counsels and understanding of Divine Mysteries, all the openings of God, and all their knowledge of God would come for nothing: What then would become of the trade of preaching Christ, and the attributes of God; then their Silver shrine trade will be spoiled, and then their *Diana* is gone; and this Light hath done them no good inwardly because of their unbelief; and it doth them no good outwardly, because it spoils their preaching trade,

because it teacheth Men for nothing, and for God's sake the *light of the knowledge of God, that shines in the face of Jesus Christ*, wherein are the Openings of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God.

So that if any come to know the Vertue and the Power that turneth Men from Darknes to Light, they are come to another state, and *turned from the power of Satan to the power of God*; and when the Power of God is revealed in them, then they say, *This is my God*; now I know the true God; they speak as those that are acquainted with him, *This is life eternal to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*: It is not to know him at a Distance, but as always present: The Soul comes to be acquainted with God as familiarly as a Man is acquainted with his Friend, and better too: A Man that is acquainted with his Friend, only knows some things pertaining to him; but those that are acquainted with their Maker they know *the whole counsel of God*, so far as belongs to their Peace; therefore it was not in vain said of old, *Acquaint thou thy self with him and be at peace*: Be but acquainted with that inward Power that knows thy Thoughts, and then no body needs to preach a Sermon to thee of the Omnipresence of God; no Body needs make thee a Doctrine of it, and offer Reasons and Motives to believe it; it is all foolish labour; I know that God is with me, and near me; I feel him in me and with me,

at my down-lying and up-rising; when I am in my Shop and about my business he is with me in all Places; and such a Man is also well instructed about the Omniscience of God; God's knowing every thing; I have learned that since I came to know him, all the Doctors in Europe can tell me no more than I know in that Point; *The Lord observeth all my goings, and numbeth all my steps; Lord, thou makest manifest the thoughts of my heart, thou searchest my heart, and tryest my reins.* Here is God's Omniscience and knowing all things. Here is Divinity growing out of the Life.

Then the Wisdom of God is infinite; so are all God's Attributes Infinite, Incomprehensible and Unspeakable, they are all so in him; but he makes manifest a measure of his Wisdom; he brings a Man from being such a Fool as he was before, to become a wise Man; He was such a Sot and Fool as to be drunk and tumble in the Dirt; he could not stand upon his Legs, but now he is become wise and sober: Another was so foolish as to defile himself and wallow in his Uncleaness; now such a Man comes to true Wisdom, it begins in the fear of God, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:* What doth his Wisdom do? It keeps him out of the Dirt; It makes him live, first as a Man, then as a Christian, *to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world:* It leads him into the Knowledge of the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God; *to know and comprehend with all*

Saints what is the height, and length, and breadth, and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge: This is more than bare Sobriety and moderate Living; such are taught to live soberly, righteously and godlily, to live by Faith, and to be led into the knowledge of the mystery of the Kingdom of God; to know the Lord Jesus Christ to their Justification. This is the learned and the wise Man; he hath got the Substance as well as the Shadow; he hath the Marrow as well as the Bone; he is reconciled to God, through Christ; he hath Remission of Sins through Christ Jesus, that died for him and rose again.

When you come to be partakers of this, it will do you good; Notions will not do it; when you come to know God for your selves, and understand him for your selves, to know him as your Saviour and Redeemer, that hath rescued you from the Snares of the wicked one; whoever doth this they will worship God; when they have this Knowledge of him, they will bow to him, they will be like those of old that said, *he is our Judge, he is our Law-giver, he is our King, and he will save us:* There arose a Testimony in the Hearts of good People of that Age, that God was their Judge that judged them, their Law-giver that directed them how they should make their way to him; that he was their King and ought to rule them, for he must save them.

So when People come to know God for themselves, to be inwardly acquainted with God for themselves; when a Company of these Souls meet together, when they have been at this School and learned this Lesson of Divinity, they then sit down and wait upon the Lord, that God *that searcheth the heart and tryeth the reins*, and observeth how they do Service for the Honour of his Name, and they receive Spiritual Gifts from him to their Edification and Comfort, and they receive Judgment from him when they do any thing contrary to his Mind.

The Lord Jesus Christ he is the Minister of the Sanctuary which the Lord hath pitched: If Men have a Church, as they call it, they must have *John or Thomas* for their Minister: We know who is the Minister of such a Place: but here is a Minister set up in God's Sanctuary, *this Priests Lips shall preserve knowledge*. All that come to God's Church are taught of this Priest, he is a high one, *the high priest of our profession*, we have not such another; he is not set up by a Carnal Commandment; his Induction came not from any Priest in this World, but his Induction came from the God of Heaven and Earth; his Father set him up for a Priest; he comes by a Heavenly Induction and Commission, *he is a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek*, not after the Order of *Aaron*: If you come to God's Church you may hear this Minister.

Some have called a House of Stone or Wood a Church, but that will not do now, therefore there are People that know better than they when they gather Churches of living Stones; Men and Women are gathered to these Churches. Now the Apostle saith, the Church is in God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: If you will come to Church you must come to Jesus Christ, the Church is in God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the general Assembly, the Congregation of his faithful People. What do you mean by a Church? Ask a Learned Man, that understands Greek and Hebrew, what is the meaning of the Word? A Church, saith he, is the Congregation of the Faithful, it is an Assembly of the Faithful People congregated together. Where must they meet? they must meet in the *general assembly of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven.* The Hebrews were come to that Church, though they lived many hundred Miles asunder, in *Asia, Cappadocia and Bythinia:* You are come to the *general assembly of the first-born;* there is a Priest, there is the high priest of our profession, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a priest after the order of Melchisedeck, not after the order of Aaron. How long is this Priest like to stay in his Priesthood? For ever, *He is a priest for ever, not after a carnal commandment, but the power of an endless life.*

The Priests that were after *Aaron's Order* they could not continue: Death snatched one away,

away, then they must have another Priest; but here is one that hath a Priesthood higher than the Heavens, by the Power of an endless Life: Here is the Priest of God's Church, and the Teacher of God's People; so that when God's People come to Church, that is, to God the Father, there Christ teacheth them, according to the old Prophecy, *I will teach my People my self.*

We have laboured to bring People to this Teaching, that they might come to the Knowledge of the Living God. Now there needs none to teach them, *for they are taught of God*; blessed be God, *our labour hath not been in vain, we see the fruit of our labours and are satisfied*: We have been labouring to bring Men to know the Lord, now *all shall know the Lord from the greatest to the least*, and bow before him and worship him; they hear that *their high priests lips shall preserve knowledge*: If they do amiss, he chastiseth them for it; if they do well, then he comforteth them by his Spirit: Now our Labour is that all may be brought to this, and that every one may know the Lord, and may fear him and serve him, and worship him in his Temple: Our Bodies are a Temple for that use, to worship God in; *know you not that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost*? you must worship in your selves, you must go into your selves, you must know the Exercise of the Graces of the Spirit in your selves, and the Workings of the Spirit of Truth in your selves,

selves, and that your Souls that are in your Bodies may be bowed to the Power of the Spirit, and that your Worship must be in the Spirit; you must pray in the Spirit, and give Thanks in the Spirit.

Though those that set up Worship in the Church, talk of Divinity and Religion in every part of it; yet the Substance of all the Shadows of the Law are fulfilled in the Gospel; the Substance of all the Modes, and Rites, and Forms of Religion are fulfilled in the Gospel-way: So then let every one compare and examine their State, and consider how the case stands between them and their Maker, what Knowledge they have of God, and what Trust they have put in him, that so they may be perswaded and prepared to come within the Pale of this Church. But you must first come out of the World, else you can never come into that Church that is in God; if you be in the World, you must go to the World's Church, and be the Members of the World's Church; and you shall have this for your Pains, the World will love you; but if you come out of the World's Church into God's Church, the World cannot love you.

Be as good as thou wilt, thou canst never be so good as Christ Jesus, and they loved him not because he was not of the World; *if you were of this world, saith Christ, the world would love its own; but since you are not of the world, but I have taken you out of it, therefore the world*

world hates you; if they do so to the green tree, what will they do to the branches? are you better than I, faith our Saviour? the Servant is not greater than his Lord: Those that are the Disciples of Christ must be content to be persecuted, reviled and hated for his names sake; for thus they treated him who was holy, and harmless, and undefiled, who gave them a good Example, and who did them no hurt, but did them good; yet the World hated him, and it is but reasonable that you should suffer from the World in the same manner, and bear it at their Hands.

If you come to this Church that is in God the Father, and Jesus the Mediator, the Church of the first-born that are written in heaven, and come out of the World's Church, then the World will be about your Ears, all the World will set themselves against this Church, against the Woman that shall bring forth a Birth, that shall rule over the Nations: There appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman cloathed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, and she being with Child cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there also appeared another wonder in heaven (a terrible thing) and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns; and the dragon stood before the Woman that was ready to be delivered, for to devour her Child as soon as it was born: and she brought forth a man Child, that was to rule all Nations with a rod of

of iron, and her child was caught up to God, and to his throne. When the Dragon was ready to devour this Birth, God took it into his own Care, in spite of the Devil and all his Instruments, and he will save the Child and preserve the Woman; *he that sits in heaven will laugh at his Enemies and defeat them.* There is a place appointed for the Woman in the Wilderness, where she is preserved by the Almighty Power, where she is nourished for a Time, and Times, and half a Time, from the Face of the Serpent; but she must come out again after some Time, in spite of the Devil and all his Instruments, of all his Dragons and Serpents: The Woman must come out of the Wilderness, and the Man-Child must come down with great Power, to rule the Nations.

This hath been accomplished, say some, above fourteen hundred Years ago; and, if you will take their Word, the Church hath been come so long out of the Wilderness. But the Church that they speak of, hath it not wanted Holiness and Righteousness? Hath it given *glory to God on high, with peace on earth and good will to men?* No, their Church hath lived in Tyranny and barbarous Cruelty, and shedding of Blood. They say the Church was in the Wilderness in *Dioclesian's* Time, and when *Constantine* came to the Empire then she came out of the Wilderness.

If it had been a Holy Church, we should have seen the Man-Child come down from God,

God, and Holiness and Righteousness would have *run down like a mighty stream*, and Truth would have filled the whole Earth. All these things have not yet been fulfilled, for we have seen the Professors of Truth fallen in the Streets; they have been persecuted and troubled, and thrown into Prisons and Dungeons, but there is a better Church somewhere to be found.

I read of the Holy Church, the Lamb's Wife, the Spouse of Christ that hath been hid somewhere, a great while, in some Corner or other in the Wilderness; but she will come forth again out of the *wilderness, leaning upon her well-beloved*: She doth not come leaning on this Prince and the other Potentate: She comes not out of the Wilderness leaning on Captains, Generals and Armies, but leaning on Christ her well-beloved, the Immortal, Invisible Power of the Son of God; she trusteth in it.

All the other Churches, I have read of, they have leaned upon one Prince or Potentate, or one Emperor or another, and they have relied on these great Men as on their Bulwark; but this Church that comes out of the Wilderness, will come leaning only upon her well-beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of her Faith; she will put her Trust in him, for he will deliver his Church from all her Enemies: And though the Serpent cast out of his Mouth Water as a Flood, after the Woman, that he might cause her

her to be carried away of the Flood, yet the Lord will cause the Earth to help the Woman, and the Earth shall open her Mouth and swallow up the Flood which the Dragon cast out of his Mouth. Let the Dragon do what he can to destroy the Woman and her Seed, she knows what her beloved can do, he will command the Earth to open and swallow up the Flood, and she shall go dry through it.

How happy are they that lean upon Christ their well-beloved? The Church of Christ in all Ages hath leaned upon him, and he hath founded his Church upon a Rock, so that the Devil and all his Instruments, and the very gates of hell shall not prevail against her. The Members of this Church have their Teacher Christ Jesus, and they receive Counsel and Direction from him: He is their Priest and Teacher, and he teacheth them by his Spirit and his Word, which he hath placed in their Hearts, and given them an Understanding to know him that is true: Christ's Word you must keep to, if you will be true Scholars. This is true Divinity; if you will have the Mysteries of the Kingdom of God communicated and opened to you, *give heed to his word, and that Truth that is in your inward parts*: Attend to that Light and that Grace that is manifested in your Hearts, and the Lord will shew you more of the Power and Efficacy thereof, and *if you be faithful in a little, he will make you ruler over much*; Live
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answerable to the Understanding and Knowledge that God hath given you, and if you be faithful in a little he will communicate more and more of his Mind and Will to you; and if you be led by the Spirit of Truth, you will trust in it, and hearken to it, and understand the Language of it in your own Hearts; and if you be a willing People in the day of God's Power, God will work all things in you and for you, and work in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Sermon IX.

The wonderful Love of God to Mankind.

Preached at St. Martin's-Le-Grand, November the 9th, 1690.

IT is our great Concern, while we are in this World, to promote the Glory of God, and to work out our own Salvation, to endeavour what in us lies to be sensible, and to help one another to be sensible of the Love of God to us: This is the only thing that can give us true comfort, to have a Sense of the Love of God

God to us in Christ Jesus: There is nothing more certain than that all of us are Partakers of the Love of God, which is imparted to us daily, and we live not a Day without it; but we may, if we have not a care, live many Days without it, and without the comfortable Sense of it; and that is the reason that a great many of the Sons and Daughters of Men do shew forth in their Lives so little Love to God, because they have so little Sense of his Love to them; for the Apostle *John*, that had attained to a great Knowledge and Experience in Christianity, plainly declareth, that the reason of that Love that we have to God is, *because he first loved us*; and I do not believe that any Man can have any true Love to God, that is not sensible of the Love of God to him.

And as for those temporal Blessings that we enjoy in this Life, as Health and Strength, and our very Breath and Being, and well-being, that every Day and Hour are continued, they are from the Love of God to us, and the lengthening out of our Lives and vouchsafing us Opportunities for the Good of our Souls are evident Tokens of God's Love and Goodwill to us. Where these things are not considered and regarded, Men live *like the Beasts that perish*, and regard not him that made them, but go on in Disobedience to him, and Dishonouring of his great Name, and heaping up Wrath upon their own Souls: And thus doth every Man, while he remains in his

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natural state and condition; for there is in every Man by nature the Seed and Root of all Sin and Rebellion against God, which makes him return Evil to God for the good he doth to us.

And I believe we are all of us sensible in some measure of the depravedness that is fallen upon all Mankind, and of that Enmity to God, and that aversness that is in Men to the doing the Will of God, and that impotency and inability that is in every Man to the reforming of his Ways, and the changing of his Heart, and leaving of his corrupt and vicious Inclinations without the Divine Help and Assistance of the Grace and Spirit of God.

Now they that are thus far sensible of their Alienation by nature from the Lord, and are also sensible that the time they have here, is the only time they have for their preparing and being fitted for that Everlasting Kingdom which we all would enjoy, How ought this to affect the Mind of every one, that while they have time they might prize it and improve it, and come to an inward sense of the Love of God, that so they might have a Love raised in their Hearts again to God? For People will never be obedient unto God 'till they love him, nor never love him 'till they are sensible of his Love to them.

Therefore that which is the means and way of God's making known himself to the Sons and Daughters of Men, that means and that way ought every one to embrace; every one ought

ought to be acquainted with it, and have the exercise of their minds in it, that so we might come to the knowledge of God, and might know by an experimental and sensible feeling the kindness of God to us.

And truly Friends, they that are minded to spend their time and exercise themselves in the consideration of the mercy and kindness of God, they have work enough for their whole life-time to consider and contemplate the manifold Mercies of God bestowed upon them; for we have our Life and Breath from him, whom the whole World obeys, and serves; God that made all living Creatures, hath created us, preserved us, he hath had long suffering and patience towards us until now, and he is yet minded to do us good, which is evidently manifest by the invitations and promises he hath made us, and the workings of his Holy Spirit that he hath made us acquainted withal.

For who is there in this Assembly that God hath not made sensible of the tenders of his Grace, and invitations to Repentance and Reformation, that they that live loosely and vainly in the World might turn to the Lord with all their Hearts; and consider their ways and doings? God *hath waited to be gracious* to the Sons and Daughters of Men, and his mercy and patience hath been beyond all humane patience, beyond the patience that ever you did bestow upon any, this the Lord hath bestowed upon you; therefore I intreat you in

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the love of God, let this consideration sink deeply into your Spirits, that you may be affected with the kindness of God and his *patience towards you*, and his *long suffering*, while you have been sinning against him.

But some will say, How shall I know this? After what manner may I experience this love of God to me? How may I be sure that the Lord hath a love for me?

My Friends, it is not only temporal kindness that we enjoy from God, it is not only the lengthening out of our Days, that is an evident token of the love of God to us; but there is a demonstration and manifestation of it that is universally extended to the Sons and Daughters of Men, in that he hath sown his Word in them, and hath sown his Truth and his Grace in their Hearts, that every Man, tho' never so wicked, never so foolish and vain, yet he hath many times checks and re-proofs in his own Heart: I know it, and I doubt not but you do.

Pray whence comes it that which doth stop you in a course of sin, and check and reprove you for sinning against the Lord? If you come to mind this, and consider of it, you will find it comes from God; it comes from him, from him comes our life and breath; then People should be incited to receive the Grace of God; the favour and mercy of God which he hath bestowed upon them in order to their salvation. The Scripture tells us, that *Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*. If thou hast any good

good it came by Jesus Christ, and if thou hast any Truth it came by Jesus Christ, who is the Fountain of Truth, and the Fountain of the Grace of God ; it is he by whom God hath made known himself to the Sons and Daughters of Men ; it is Christ alone that God hath *ordained to be a Mediator between God and Man, that so he might be the Minister of an everlasting covenant*, which we are brought in-to with God ; so that now People should come to the consideration of the way and means that God hath ordained for their Redemption, namely, that he hath given Jesus, that great and unspeakable Gift of his Love and Kindness to the Sons and Daughters of Men ; here is *Grace and Truth* that came by Jesus Christ : How is it come ? It is come into my Heart. Tho' Sins, and Lusts and Corruptions, perhaps, have a place in many, yet Christ hath a place too ; *He hath made his grave with the wicked and was numbred with the Transgressors* ; he was like that Seed that lies under the Clods and is the least of all Seeds, yet when it comes out of the Ground it riseth high and spreads abroad its Branches and brings forth Fruit ; this Love of God, this unchangeable Holy Truth, is in every one ; why then should not every Man be ruled and governed by it ?

But some Men will say, is Truth better than Falsehood, and Grace better than Lust and Corruption ?

you may see that by the Light that is discovered in the inward parts : Let every Man turn
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inward to the Grace of God, turn to that Light that shews it self in the Creature, and see what it will do for us : This is the Doctrine that the Apostle was sent withal; he was sent with a Commission to turn Men from Darknes to Light, and from the power of Satan to God: Why did he do it? It was for this end, that Men might have remission of Sin, and that they might come to an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus our Lord; so that this Gospel is the same that it ever was, though Men have divers ways of preaching, and several methods and ways of declaring the Truths of the Gospel; blessed be God the Apostolical Doctrine is preached again, and the blessed Gospel hath the same power attending it that was in former Days, and may have the same effect; and that this may be the Portion of every one of you, this is the end of our Labour. And we have in our Eye but two things:

I. First, to discharge a good Conscience in the sight of God, who hath given us his Word to Preach, and to turn Men from Darknes to Light, and from the power of Satan to God; that we might keep our selves free from the blood of all Men.

II. Secondly, another end is, the desire that God hath placed in our Hearts, that all Men every where might be saved; this is Gods Will; if any be Damned it is their own will, and the evil's will; this is God's will that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance and

be eternally saved. Now in this work of your Salvation, we would have regard to him that sent us to Preach the Everlasting Gospel, and we would discharge our selves faithfully, and *be made manifest in your Consciences*, that the benefits of the Gospel might come to be yours; that you might answer the purpose of God in sending Christ to be the Saviour of Mankind; you must turn from Sin to God, and then you will find the blessing that comes by Jesus, which *is to turn every one from his evil ways.*

You may read this in a Book, and you may also plainly read it in your Hearts: The Lord Jesus Christ hath given you Light to distinguish between good and evil, if you do good, you may make a comfortable reflection upon your selves, and this will be your rejoicing, *the testimony of your Conscience* on that account; but if you do evil, though all Men do justify you and commend you, yet you will be condemned in your selves; so that you have that in your selves which distinguisheth between things that differ in their nature and kind, and you have a little enlightening by the knowledge and understanding you have received concerning the things that are pleasing and displeasing to God; if after you know this you will go on in a way displeasing to God, he will at length be too hard for you, and plunge you down into the Abyss of his Wrath to all Eternity.

After Persons are satisfied and enlightened with the Light of Christ, and come to the Experience

perience of things in themselves; they will love the Light and walk in the Light; but there are many in this Age that have read the Scriptures plentifully, and yet still go on in a way of Sin, they cannot love the Light that reproves them; *He that doth evil he hates the Light, and the Dawning of the Day is as the shadow of Death to him,* and it brings nothing but condemnation upon such Persons, so that they do not love the Light, though it is evident they have it and enjoy it, and it shall be their condemnation whether they will or no; if they do not love the Light and embrace it, it will never be to their Salvation.

God hath given Christ to be a Light to the Gentiles, and his Salvation to the ends of the Earth. *He is the Light that enlightens every Man that comes into the World;* the Apostle John tells you the genealogy of the Word of God, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and the same was in the beginning with God; all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made; in him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men; The Life of the Eternal Word was the Light of Men; What Men do you mean? I answer, He is the true Light that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World. He extendeth his Light to every Man, but it is condemnation to every Man so long as he continues to be a sinner against God: This is the condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men*
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love darkness rather than Light, because their deeds are evil.

Now all Men are by nature dead in Sins and Trespases; after our first Parents fell into Sin they were dead to God; *in the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die*; when they had eaten the forbidden fruit, they did not die as to outward appearance, but they died as to that Communion they had with their Maker; in this dead state lie all the Sons and Daughters of Adam; but, as our Saviour speaks, *though they be dead, they shall live again*; Christ is Lord from Heaven, a Quickening Spirit; this is the object of our Faith that hath been extended and offered to Mankind ever since the fall; *there is no name under Heaven, no other Power or Spirit by which a Man can be saved*; this great Mediator, the Eternal Son of God, is *the Light that lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*: Faith in Christ is the same that ever it was, notwithstanding the many forms of Worship among the Sons of Men; some of Gods setting up, and some of Mens setting up; yet among all these, the object of Faith is the same, and Faith the same.

In the 11th Chapter of the *Hebrews*, that little Book of Martyrs, the Apostle there gives you a Catalogue of the mighty things that have been done by the Faith of Gods People; he begins with Abel, *By Faith Abel offered a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was Righteous, God testifying*

testifying of his Gifts; and by it, he being dead, yet Speaketh; by Faith Enoch was translated that he should not see Death, and was not found, because God translated him, for before his translation he had this Testimony that he pleased God; and so the Apostle there goes to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses: And what shall I say more, saith he, for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and Jeptha, of David, Samuel, and of the Prophets, who through Faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained Promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of Fire, escaped the Edge of the Sword, out of weakness were made strong, turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens. All these great and noble things were done by Faith; it was the aspect their Souls had upon Christ the Mediator between God and Man; it was their trust and reliance upon God through Christ the Mediator that did support and uphold them in all they did and suffered. This Faith is still the same.

There are many Faiths in the World beside, but they will prove but the Faith of Hypocrites. Some have a Faith, that if they do this and the other Work, they say you may trust your Souls upon these good Works; but this is not the Faith of Abraham, the Father of the faithful. But some called Christians are gone so far in the Doctrine of merits, that they think they can do enough for their own Salvation, and for their Friends and Relations too;

that there may be more Merit still over and above, that others may have Benefit by the Merit of their Works of Supererogation : But this is not the Faith of *Abraham* and other Saints, by which they wrought such Wonders in the World. I would not have Men trust at all in their own Works for Salvation, but trust in Christ alone, who *is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him.*

But some will object: We are taught the Doctrine of Faith in Christ, and Justification by him.

Well, for my part, my Tongue shall as soon drop out of my Mouth as oppose the Doctrine of being justified by Faith in Christ: But, let me tell you, this may be misapplied; If a Man believe that he is justified by Faith in Christ, and yet knows in his own Conscience that he is condemned, he believeth a Lie, he is seduced and deceived: A Man cannot be justified by Christ, when the Spirit of Christ condemneth him: Such a one, when he comes to lay down his Head upon his Dying Pillow, all his Faith will fly away. I have met with some Instances, lamentable Instances of those that were called Christians, that have made a Profession of Religion, and at last have laid down their Heads in Sorrow. If this be your mistake, consider while you have Time, that you may die in Peace.

Now the Proposition and Tender of the Love of God to Mankind, hath always carried that Limitation with it, that every one
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in the World ought to observe ; If a Man hope to be saved by Christ, he must be ruled by him : It is contrary to all manner of Reason, that the Devil should rule a Man, and Christ be his Saviour : The whole tenour of the New Testament is against it (pray read it as oft as you please, for it is a good Exercise) you will find the true Christian's Faith to be this, That he that hath Faith in Christ hath an Operation upon him for the Cleansing his heart and purifying and purging his *Conscience from dead works, that he may serve the living God* ; though he hath been a Servant of the Devil, it will make him leave his former Servitude, and bring him under the Influence of another Law, *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which will make him free from the law of sin and death.* The Apostle sets down the several Conditions he had passed through, *I was alive without the law once* ; he thought himself a Man, a brave Man, a Man of Understanding, that had profited among the Jews ; I was alive, having respect to that Law which should have been my Governour ; *but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.* He had read the Law, the Commandment many time, and had been at the reading of it in the Synagogue ; but there was a coming of the Commandment which he had not been acquainted with ; there was a Writing of the Law of God in his Heart ; when he came to this inward Work upon him, where was then the Life he lived ? *When the commandment came,*

Sin revived, and I died: There was a professing Life he formerly lived, but he was slain, by the Power of the Commandment, it laid him in the Dust as a slain Man; when he was in a slain condition he found out that Law in him that was the Law of Sin and Death, and this caused a Combat and a War in him; I find a Law, saith he, that when I would do good, evil is present with me; for I delight in the law of God in the inner man; but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members: Now this brought him to a Poverty of Spirit, into a Sense of his miserable Condition, and then he cries out, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!

Now some People in this Day, they are like the Apostle, they have a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, the good that they would do they do not, and they can go no further: But the Apostle Paul did reach further, though he did not in that state know Deliverance, yet he had a Faith that he should be delivered, and that he should not be miserable all his Days. Thus having led the Romans into the several States through which he passed, he brings them to a further State, *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death: And now there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. How shall we know*

God to Mankind.

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know this? *They walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.* Now Paul was come to that sanctified state, that state of Freedom and Liberty which Christ Jesus will bring all those unto that believe in him. •

Holy Men, in former Days, did experience and find a great Strife and Warfare in their own Hearts, they would do all well, and exercise a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man; but there is a Law of Sin that wars in their members; if we yield to it it leads to Sin and Death; but if we yield ourselves to the *law of the Spirit of life*, there is a Power that is derived from the Mediator, that will translate the Soul out of the kingdom of darkness and Sin, which the Devil is the Prince of, and bring it into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

There must be a real Change wrought in us before we can come to God, and to Fellowship and Communion with God, which alone can make the Soul happy. Let this be the Exercise of every one of us to adore and magnifie the great mercy and the kindness of God, that he hath not withdrawn his Spirit from you, but hath placed a Monitor in your Bosoms that calls upon you to *cease to do evil, and learn to do well*, and to consider that *the wages of sin is death*: Here is a Sin, I may commit it; there is a Temptation before me, but I know there is a Bait and a Hook; I may swallow it if I will, but if I do, it will be my Ruin: Would I come to eternal

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Death

Death, and have my Portion with Lyars and wicked Persons in the Kingdom of Darknes, *Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched?* or would I have my Portion with Saints and Angels? If I would have my Portion with the Blessed in the Kingdom of God when I die, I must walk in the way that leads to it; but the *Gate is strait and the way narrow, and few there be that find it;* Labour then to be one of those few.

But what signifies our Labour (some may say) if we can *do nothing that is good, nor so much as think a good thought?* What signifies our Labour? all the Labours and Endeavours in the whole World cannot make a Man happy.

I now speak to a People to whom God doth vouchsafe the Help and Assistance of his Grace and Spirit, and the Visitations of his Love and Power; you must now endeavour to do something; if a Man endeavour, with the help of God, he may do a great deal of good, and shun a great deal of Evil: Though all our Endeavours, in our own Power and Strength can signifie nothing, yet they are required by God, and by joyning them with his Grace, and laying hold of Opportunities, by Divine Assistance, we may do what God will accept. But if a Man do any thing in his own Power and Strength, whether Prayer, Hearing, Reading, Meditation, or any other Duty, he had as good let it alone.

I would

I would consider you as those that God hath followed with his Grace and the Manifestation of his Spirit; this is given to every Man to profit withal, and every Man hath Opportunity to work with it; but he must work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work.

Let every one of us that are now met together, labour to be sensible of the Love of God to us, and love him above all, and express our Love by a willing and persevering Obedience, that we may have the love of God shed abroad upon our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and offer up living Praises to him through Jesus Christ, who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father: To him be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon

Sermon X.

Salvation from Sin by Jesus
Christ.

*Preached at Devonshire - House, August
the 9th, 1691.*

IT is a general Doctrine in the World, That no Man by any means in the World can ever be set free from Sin in this Life : This is universally received almost among all Christians, in all Churches, one and another ; tho' they differ never so much in other things, yet they agree in this ; so that this Doctrine hath got a Sway in the World, and it is accounted a great Delusion and a Heresie, and a grand Error for any to question the Truth of it.

Now while a Man is of that Belief, That there is an impossibility of living without Sin, and of breaking down the Kingdom of Satan in any one Soul in the World, How can Men hope or believe that Righteousness should prevail in the Heart of one Man ? There is neither King nor Beggar, if he be a Bishop or a Gospel Minister, the Devil must have a Rule and Government in him, so long as he lives in this World. As long as this is believed it is

not possible that the other Belief should take place; It is madness to think that I must be under the Rule and Government of Satan if I am under the Government of the Son of God. And it is still greater madness to say, That Christ and the Devil are both my Governours and Rulers: It is prodigious Folly and Madness to speak after this manner.

This Belief prevails over all Men; over the Wise, and Mighty, and Noble, and Learned, that they can never be freed from the Power of Sin in this World, but that the Devil will lead them into Sin every Day; let Men be never so sober, never so abstemious in their Lives, let them spend never so many Hours in Prayer every Day; let them come to Meetings and hear Sermons, and write them and repeat them, and do what they will, here is a Bar of Unbelief that lies in the way, that makes Men *depart from the living God* and his Power, and lose the Benefit they should receive from Christ: And therefore they go to fetch it another way, that is, to have the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and they shall be holy and pure in the sight of God, when they are polluted in their own Eyes; and when they see their daily Failings, Infirmities and Corruptions, yet God may not see them; but that he sees them Holy, Just and Righteous in his Son.

What strange kind of Doctrine is this? I must presume that God will see me in his Son Jesus Christ, when I never was in Christ:

How

How can this be? *He that is in Christ is a new creature; old things are done away, and all things are become new:* But if there be Old things remaining still, and I be not become New, shall I presume that I am in Christ, and that God will see me in his Son? When People come to use the Understanding that God hath given them, they will look upon themselves as barred out by their Unbelief, that the Nations have drunk in; and it is as sweet to them as the Honey and the Honey-Comb.

But, blessed be God, many have vomited it up already: If they would have placed this Doctrine upon Man's natural Ability, I would have said *Amen* to it. I know there is none of us all have a natural Ability and Power to deliver his own Soul from Sin and Satan; but when they come to place it upon God, that though the *Lord make bare his arm, and reveal his power;* though they come to have the Grace of God, that still they could not be delivered from sin; this hath Blasphemy at the bottom of it. The other reflected upon Man's Power, this reflects upon the Power of God Almighty: That the Devil hath got such a Power over us, that God hath not Power over us, nor cannot have Power and Dominion over us, so that of a whole Nation he cannot have one Man to serve him.

Much might be said in answer to this: When Men are once willing to serve God, they will be willing to leave the Service of
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the Devil. There is no way to answer that good Wish, but by waiting upon God for the revealing of his Power: I pray God that when you come to a Meeting, you may say, Lord, let thy Power go forth upon my Heart; let thy Arm be made bare, and deliver me from the Power and Dominion of Sin. Some will say they feel God's Power in a Meeting; I feel the Power of God working upon my Heart, in order to the taking away Sin and Transgression, and giving me Victory over it, through the Lord Jesus Christ. If they feel this Power of God upon them, it is their Duty to believe it and depend upon it: If I believe it, I must wait for the Dictates of it, and believe that I shall be able to do *all things through Christ that strengthens me*: Then Faith will come forth into Works, and appear to be a living Faith.

You may remember what the Apostle James faith, *As the body without the spirit is dead, so Faith without works is dead also*. As soon as a Man comes to join with the mighty Power of God, he will be able to withstand Temptation: If he comes into evil Company he will deny them and not comply with them; he will find then something of a Power and Ability to serve God; though he is not come to Perfection, yet he is walking in the way of Holiness, and *pressing forward towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*: He will say, I am got a little nearer than I was towards the place where I would

would be, towards that Life which I would live and die; then let Death come when it pleaseth God, it shall be welcome.

This is the wickedness of many in the World, they will not live such a Life as they would be willing to die in: They cannot come at it unless it be given them to believe, for it is the Gift of God; they must come to their Governour and Leader, which goes before, to the Gift of God, which is Eternal Life; then let Death come when it will, if I have the Gift of Eternal Life.

It is a miserable thing to think that there are divers that have not laid hold of Eternal Life: It is manifested that we may lay hold of it, there is a Hand of Faith joining with it. When a Man comes to lay hold of Eternal Life, this Life will purifie him and sanctifie him, at least by degrees, 'till he be wholly sanctified in Body, Soul and Spirit: This is that which the Apostle writes in one of his Epistles, *Your Salvation is nearer than when you at first believed.* When they first believed, their Salvation was a pretty way off: He describes Salvation to be the End of their Faith and Hope. When a Man comes to be delivered from his Sins, he shall serve God without fear; but when a Man comes to live by Faith, he shall overcome; he is a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, and he must fight valiantly under his Banner 'till he gets a Victory over all his Enemies, and then his Salvation

tion is much nearer than when he at first believed,

I would I could say so of some of you, for I fear your Salvation is farther off: Some go stragling here and there, as Sheep not having a Shepherd; this is that which my Spirit is intent upon. You that are Travellers towards the Kingdom of God, it is the wonderful Grace and Mercy of God that ever it should come into your Minds to seek the Kingdom of God and the Righteousness thereof: They that have obtained this Mercy from God, shall receive and enjoy other Mercies, better Mercies; *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness*: That is one Mercy; but there is another Mercy, They shall be filled, they shall be satisfied: When a Man comes to this, he must take up a daily Cross, and exercise Self-denial; but if he follows Christ he shall be satisfied, he shall then have nothing but Peace and Joy; he shall then sing Praises and Glory to God in the highest, and to the Lamb for ever.

There is none can understand the Glory that is laid up for those that take up their Cross and follow Christ and love his Appearing. This is the great Blessing that God doth give unto his People, *He hath sent his Son Jesus to bless us, and turn us from our iniquities*: This is a Blessing indeed. Take heed that you do not admit of any new Term: Do not think to bring God Almighty to new Articles,

ticles, the Terms are declared and concluded on already: If you will obtain the Blessing you must be turned every one of you from your Iniquities; The terms are already made, the Law of God must be *written in the heart and inward thoughts*, and you must close with that Power that will write the Law in your Hearts, and by travelling towards the Kingdom of God, you will see the coming of that Kingdom into you.

It was the Joy of my Soul, that I saw the Kingdom of Christ would be set up in my Heart, before it was set up there; then I saw the Lord's wonderful Work, and a great Alteration in me, when the Lord was pleased to wean me from the World's Breast, and take off my Heart, and wean it from worldly Lusts, from the World's Joys, and Pleasures, and Fashions, and the World's Honour and Reputation: I saw the Lord was pleased to wean me from these things, and brought me to an holy Resignation, to give up my Heart to him: If I have Joy it must be from the Holy Spirit; if I have Pleasure it must be in the Presence of God, who *in the multitude of my thoughts within me* made his Comforts to *delight my Soul*; and if he bring not Comfort to you, you will never have it; you cannot expect it 'till you do believe; and when you have Faith you can feel the Kingdom of God within you: There must be the New Birth, the Work of Regenerrtion, for *except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; there

there must be a translation from Death to Life, there must be a turning out of the old Bottom and a fixing upon a new Bottom, upon *Christ Jesus the rock of ages*; there must be a Subjection to his Holy Power and Government, else you cannot see the Kingdom of God.

Many have gone on in a Profession many Years, and never saw the Beauty of it; every little Trifle in the World hath diverted them, and drawn them away. This and the other Pleasure hath drawn away their Hearts, they have seen the Glory of the World, which hath captivated them: But those that make a Profession of the Truth, and have seen the Beauty and Glory of the Kingdom of Christ, they should be shy of returning to the World again, for the Apostle saith, *It happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire*; for it had been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them: They made a Profession and were Members of a visible Church, and had a Name to live, but they were inwardly dead; the Sight of the Kingdom of God is not given to such, but unto Babes, that have a Divine Birth, and that desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby. God hath hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto Babes.

You

You that are here this day, I speak to those that would receive some Kindness from God, and that desire the Knowledge of his ways, and that the Mysteries of his Kingdom may be revealed to you, let your Minds be retired and you shall find the great things belonging to your Peace made known to you. We have spoken much of this, but I would not have you know it only by our Sayings, but I would have you go into your selves, to see whether God hath not bestowed this Grace and Blessing upon you: if God hath given you Grace, do not *turn it into wantonness*; do not abuse the Grace of God. What is it that you do when the Grace of God hath convinced you that such and such a thing is Sin, and if you do it, it will turn to your Ruine? Dare you venture to commit Sin after you are convinc'd of it? O take heed of doing *despite to the spirit of grace*, and of *grieving the holy spirit*, whereby you are sealed to the day of redemption.

I wish that the weight of this Consideration might lie upon you, and that a holy Dread and Aw of God might be wrought in your Hearts, that you might be kept from sinning against God: You know there is a general Out-cry against presumptuous sinning, sinning against Light: Why should not we all cry out against it? It is a most dreadful thing for any Man to sin against his Knowledge and Conviction; if any of us have been guilty of sinning against Light, let such a one say, I have done

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Iniquity, I will do so no more; but enter into Covenant with the Lord, and say, O Lord, so far as thou hast revealed thy Will unto me, I will obey it; I will delight to do thy Will, O God, tho' I cross mine own Will. Whatever I cross I will not cross God's holy Spirit, by which I may be sealed to the Day of Redemption; I will never do this though I hazard my chief Interest in the World: This is the Temper of a true Christian, and I pray God make all you of this Mind.

And now my Friends, you that desire to see this great Work wrought in your selves, commit the whole Work to God, and trouble not your selves about it. I am sure God will carry on his own Work, and bring down the Devil's Kingdom, and rebuke that unclean Spirit that is gone forth over the whole Nation, and pour out abundantly of his holy Spirit to carry on a glorious Reformation: This I believe God will certainly do, from what he hath wrought in my own Soul. I know not what Instruments are to be employed in the Work, I leave that to the Lord; but the Kingdom of Christ shall be advanced, and it shall be outwardly, and a Besom of Destruction shall sweep away all his Enemies from the Earth, and the Wrath of God shall burn against them; only there is an obduration hath been upon the Nations of the World, and something hath stood in the way in all Generations.

But

But however, I am sure wicked Men in England and London may well say, that Christ is the Saviour of all Men, but especially of them that believe. He hath saved this City and Nation from the Plagues and Vengeance that hang over us, Many Years the Lord hath spared us, and waited to be gracious for a long time, to see if we will at last turn to him. How long the Mediator will intercede on our behalf, we cannot tell; there is a time when the Long-Suffering of God will come to an end. God hath brought a Scourge upon the Nations round about us, and the Flames of his Wrath have kindled upon them, and Destruction hath overtaken them; how soon it may be our Lot, we know not; all our Money, our Silver and Gold, and Valour and Courage, will not be able to stave it off, if the Lord but blow upon us. It is even at the Door, there is but one way to save us, and that is turning to the Lord, and crying to the Lord for the continuance of his Mercies and Long-suffering, and Patience towards us. In this Cry, let us all cry to the Lord, that are Lovers of the Nation, and let us join our earnest Supplications in this Work, seeing the Lord hath made us the Monuments of his Mercy and preserving Goodness.

This Island hath been continually surrounded with War and Blood, and Flames and Destruction, and the Cry of the Orphans hath been heard from other Nations: And while they have been consumed with Flames, and deluged

deluged in Streams of Bood, we have sate under our own Vines and Fig-trees; but Judgments hang over the Nation, and whether they will fall or not the Lord knows: But what shall we do for the good of our Nation, and Cities and Families, but labour every one in the Fear of God to reform your Lives, and to take heed that we sin not against the Light, lest we die and perish in the midst of those terrible Judgments that hang over us.

Let us turn from our evil Ways, and depart from all Iniquity, that the Kingdom of Christ may be set up in our selves. It is the Righteous in the Nation that the Lord looks at, and for their sakes he will spare a Nation. If there be a People among us that walk in Humility, and lament and mourn for the Abominations committed in the midst of us, God will have regard to them, and he will hear the Cries and the Supplications of a praying People.

Friends, You that cannot make use of Sword and Spear for the saving of a Nation, you may do good by your Prayers, and turning to the Lord with an unfeigned Heart, and let your Sincerity appear before him. If I would take a Common-Prayer Book in my Hands, and Pray never so devoutly and solemnly, if I be not sincere, what will that do? Or, if I pray without Book, or if I pray without a Form, or reject the Form that others have made for me, what will this avail? But the Cry of the Poor, and the Sighing of the Needy,

Needy, and the effectual fervent Prayer of the Righteous, hath availed much for the saving of this Nation many Years.

Therefore, I exhort you all as you love the Nation, and as you love your selves, and your Families and Relations, sin not against the Lord ; for he is now setting up Righteousness, Equity and Justice, and it shall prevail in the Nation. God hath been pleased to gather in many that have been Enemies in it, that are now turned from Sin to God, and led Captive by the Truth : And it is their greatest Joy, that now they are no longer Servants of Sin, but are now become the Servants of God.

Now Truth will prevail, and Righteousness go forth as the Morning Sun, and we hope the Lord will shew Mercy to us for the glory of his own Name, tho' we are an unworthy People : It will be matter of Joy and Gladness to us, if the Kingdom of God be come ; then we may say our Prayer is answered. We have often prayed, *Thy Kingdom come, and thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.* If the Will of God be done, then I can do mine own Will no longer, then I can be led away by Satan no longer ; the Devil will have little Power, if I do God's Will on Earth, as it is done in Heaven ; then Praise will arise in the Hearts of every one that delight to do the Will of God, and God will carry on his Work for the glory of his own Name, and for the Redemption of his People, that Christ may be *Preached for Salvation to the Ends of the Earth.*

Sermon XI.

The Acceptable Sacrifice.

Preach'd at Grace Church-street, July the
3^d 1692.

ALL People that would worship God and meet together for that purpose, they had need have a great Reverence upon their Minds, and a holy Fear upon their Spirits, that when they enter into the House of the Lord, and draw nigh to the living God, they might not offer the *Sacrifice of Fools*, but may offer to God that which may be acceptable to him: For all Worship, and all Religion, and all Offerings and Oblations that ever were offered to God by any People, they have had a return upon the Offerers and Worshippers, either of Acceptance or Rejection. Many you know have been rejected tho' they have offered, and many have been accepted of God, and their Offerings have been a *sweet smelling Savour in his Nostrils*; and, I hope, we are all of that Mind, that we would be glad to have our Worship, and Service and Offerings to God accepted in his sight, and that our present assembling together might be for the

better, and that every one might have an Answer of Peace, and of Acceptance in their Bosoms; but that can never be unless Men be qualified and prepared in their drawing nigh to God, and that in all our Offerings and Worship that we perform, our Hearts be prepared *according to the Preparation of the Sanctuary*, the Preparation of God's Dwelling and Holy Place.

The Worshippers must be holy; there must be the Fear of God, and a Reverence of the great God upon their Minds, before People can offer an acceptable Sacrifice unto him, as the holy Apostle saith, *Heb. 11. 6. He that cometh to God, must believe that he is; which signifies, that a Preparation ought to be in the Minds and Hearts of People that would draw nigh to God; or perform any Service or Worship to God, they must have the knowledge of the God whom they worship, they must first know that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Here is a Qualification for Worshippers, for Religious Persons; as they expect when they meet together to find the Lord in the midst of them they must be qualified accordingly, there must be an Awe upon their Minds.

I am in the Presence of God, I have an expectation from God, that he will open his abounding Treasury, and minister some good unto me, or else to what purpose do People draw nigh to God? It is because they would have something of him; but they must com-

in an humble petitioning frame; *He giveth Grace to the Humble.* It is the Lofty, the Proud, those that exalt themselves, the Fat and the Full that want nothing. *These, saith the Prophet, the Lord beholdeth afar off.* A proud Man or Woman cannot draw nigh to God, the Lord looks upon them afar off; nor do they partake of those divine and heavenly Comforts and Blessings, and Counsels and Instructions that the humble Mind hath the Promise of and will certainly enjoy, *The humble God will teach, he will instruct the Meek in his Way;* but what is this to the lofty Mind? What is this to one that is exalted, and conceited and puffed up, and reckons himself full and wanting nothing, while he is swimming in the Streams of the Pleasures of this World, and savours only the things of the Earth, the pleasures of a sensual Mind? These Persons are not hungry, and so they are not fed; they are not thirsty, and so they never obtain that which can satisfy the Soul. Our Lord Jesus Christ pronounced a Blessing upon them that hunger and thirst; but that is nothing to them that are full and lack nothing.

So my Friends, in this and all other religious Assemblies, a great care ought to be upon every one, that their coming together to wait upon the Lord may be in that reverence and fear, and that hope and expectation at the hands of God, that they might be bettered by it, or else they all lose their labour, as *Cain* did; he would be an Offerer, he offered Sa-

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crifice,

crifice but was not accepted; because his Mind and Heart was not right before the Lord, his Sacrifice was rejected. It was before he had killed his Brother; he had great Guilt upon him, before he had killed his Brother; he wanted a well-doing, *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? But if thou dost not well, Sin lies at thy Door.* He was got into evil doing, and an evil Mind hindered his Acceptance with God; so it doth with all Men and Women in the World that meddle with religious Worship and Sacrifice to God, if they meddle with evil doing. There must be a taking of the Mind from the evil of Sin and Corruption, and the Mind must be brought over to something that they have received from God before ever they can be accepted.

You know the general Doctrine of all Protestants is, That we have no Acceptance with God but through Jesus Christ; we have no way to please God, nor can do any thing that shall be liked of in his sight, but only through one only Mediator. Now if so be I go to worship God, or perform any religious Duty without respect and reference to the sense and participation of the Vertue and Power of the only Mediator, how can I be accepted? As it hath pleased God out of his infinite Love to Mankind, to send this great Mediator into the World, that every Man that comes into the World is made a Participant of something of the Life and Vertue of that Mediator. So you read, *John 1. 4. In him was Life, and the*

was the *Light of Men*, the true *Light* that
lighteth every *Man* that cometh into the *World*;
and that with respect to *Men* whether they
are good or no, both to good and bad, tho'
Men are bad, as all *Men* are by *Nature*: So
that tho' they are *Children of Wrath* and *Heirs*
of *Eternal Damnation*, and in their natural
State by reason of *Sin*, yet for all that this
one *Mediator*, in whom this *Light* hath shined,
he hath sent forth that *Light* among the *Sons*
and *Daughters of Men*, that is, the *Light of*
Men, that enlightens every one. So there is
an offer made of something that presents it
self to the view of every *Man* that is good, if
he apply his *Mind* to it, he may have that
Good that comes by *Jesus Christ*; he may
draw nigh to *God*; as bad as he is, he hath
some Good that *God* hath bestowed upon *Men*
good and bad. There is no *Man* such a *Liar*
but he hath some *Truth* in him; there is no
Man so ungodly, but he knows that which is
pure and holy, that which hath reprov'd him,
checked, convinced him of his *Ungodliness*.
This presents it self to the view of every *Man*
and *Woman*, and calls them to *Repent-*
ance.

Now for *Men* to make a shew and pretence
to *Worship*, and not have regard to the *Glory*
of *God*, how can they draw nigh to *God*, or
God draw nigh to them? Our Lord *Jesus*
Christ saith, *That where two or three are ga-*
thered together in my Name, I will be in the
midst of them; but if *People* meet together in

their Sin and Wickedness, if they have a loose and a vain Mind, and intend to go on in Wickedness and Sin; if they meet, they meet not in Christ's Name, but in the Devil's Name, and he is in the midst of them, and he works and *Rules in the Hearts of the Children of Disobedience.* So that this hath been the ground and reason why abundance of Meetings upon this account have been fruitless as to the Benefit of their Souls, and Peoples Expectations have been frustrated as to their Salvation; they have not met with that in which the Blessing is, and to which the Promise is made. The Promise is not made to People that the Devil rules; there is no Promise to such but the Promise of Eternal Wrath to be executed upon them with the Devil and his Angels to all Eternity; if you can make that a Promise.

The Promise of Life and Salvation which is recorded by the Prophets and Apostles, hath always relation to the Seed that are in Covenant with God. In this the Covenant stands, saith God to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. *I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* The Covenant is made to *Abraham* and his Seed, that is, with Christ Jesus the Mediator. It is he that brings to God those that trust in him and come to him, *He that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out*; they that do not come to Christ are cast off already. All Men, by Nature

ture, are cast away already ; if any of them will be saved, it is by coming to Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost, and to make Peace for them, and of Twain to make one new Man, and to make Peace between God and their Soul.

There is a necessity for all People that have sense of their natural state and condition, that according to Nature have no Title to the Kingdom of God, to be reconciled to God. By Nature they cannot make a claim to Righteousness and Life; they cannot reconcile themselves to God by all their Works, saith the Prophet Micah, *Will the Lord be pleased with a thousand of Rams, or with ten thousand Rivers of Oil? Shall I give my first-born for my Transgression, the fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? He hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good: And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love Mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?* They that will be saved must lay hold of Salvation in that way and method that the Lord God of Heaven and Earth hath prescribed. He hath prescribed a way for every Body to be saved, he would have no Body to perish, but that all should come to Repentance, and obtain everlasting life. God hath made a way that will serve every Body alike, Thousands as well as Ten, and all the World as well as one Man. Now the way that God hath made, is turning out of the state into which they are fallen, and forsaking that Governour that rules in the
Z. 4. Hearts.

Hearts of the Children of Disobedience, and closing with Christ, whom God hath appointed to reign in every Body's Heart. People in Christendom will all say, they have closed with Christ. Do not you hope to be saved by Christ on the Terms of the Covenant? It is not crying *Lord, Lord*, but doing the Will of God; the Terms are, *All Men must believe in Christ the Eternal Son of God*, and through the Power of that Faith they have in him, he comes to rule over them, and they become subject to him. And if a Believer be not subject to Christ, he is all one as if he was an Unbeliever; *Circumcision or Uncircumcision avails not any thing, but a new Creature, and Faith which worketh by Love.*

The Covenant doth not stand in meer Words: if I conform to such Articles, then I am a Christian; if I believe all the Articles of the Creed, then I am a Christian and a Child of God. If a Man will say, I believe, his say so is not sufficient. The condition of the Covenant that God hath made is, That Christ shall rule and have the government of those Souls that he presents to God: How should it be otherwise, seeing he is not to present any to God that are unclean? Christ hath no Commission to present any to God in their Uncleaness and Wickedness. He that believeth, he must be cleansed and purified by him: If so, then that cannot be done by ruling over them. If they had the rule of themselves, they would be polluted and be like Water, whose Cur-

rent is stopt with Dirt and Mud, not running in its own natural Stream: People will commit Sin when they have the rule of themselves; but when Christ presents People to God, and when they come to be led by him, they are cleansed and purified.

When the Apostle describes true Faith, he doth it by this quality and property of it, *It purifies the Heart*. All other Faith is *but the Hope of the Hypocrisie*, but real Faith is *the Operation of God*, saith the Apostle; and that Faith worketh in an unclean Heart to the cleansing of it, and in an impure Heart to the purifying of it: If the Heart comes to be purified, then it must needs follow that the Conversation must be pure also. No body doth an ill Work, nor speaks an ill Word, but it is from an evil Heart. Now if the *Ax come to be laid to the Root of the Tree*, and the Word of the Lord operate in the Heart powerfully, if never so much evil be in it, the Ax when laid to the Root of the Tree will cut it down; the Power of God will execute Judgement upon every thing that is contrary to him; Christ is *holy, harmless, and undefiled, and separate from Sin, and Sinners*; and tho' he extend his Life and Vertue to the Life and Soul of the most wicked Man in the World, it never joins with their Uncleanness, but keeps immaculate and undefiled in the Heart of the worst of Men.

Now this immaculate Power that comes from Christ, it will *purifie the Hearts of Men*,

and preserve them from evil Thoughts, Words and Actions: This is the manifestation of the one Mediator that they must be governed by, else they cannot be presented spotless to God the Father: There is a necessity of coming to a Saviour otherwise than by Words and Profession; we must come to him and heartily joyn with him; we have all joyned with the Devil, he hath suggested, moved, and instigated, and People have followed his instigations and motions, there is no Man but is sensible of a devilish motion, why not then of a divine motion? Though now it is become a Bugbear to say, we are moved by the Spirit of Christ; why not by that Spirit as well as by the Spirit of the wicked One? No Man doubts but that there are motions of the Devil which they are sensible of, that sometimes they have joyned with him, and sometimes they withstand him. What is the reason that Men should joyn with evil motions? There is no just reason for it. The reason why you and I withstand the motions of the Devil, is because we find another motion conveyed into our Hearts by the Spirit of God; if a Man hath one motion to commit uncleanness, he hath another motion to keep himself pure; if he hath a motion to speak a Lie, he hath another motion to speak Truth; there are two movers at the same time, in the same Heart, which shall we joyn with? Shall I joyn with the Devil's motion? If I find any thing of the love of God in my Heart, it will constrain me

to mind the good motion, and make me withstand the evil motion; so that the movings of the Spirit of God is not such a wonder.

There are none but they have bad motions in them, and they have also motions of the Spirit of Truth; they have met with evil motions, and they have admired them too much, then it is time to repent; if there be a distinction between a motion of the Spirit of Truth, and a motion of the Spirit of Error, then I may boldly say, it is our duty to joyn with the Spirit of Truth, and not with the Spirit of Error; if there be a desire in us *to be saved from the wrath to come*, then the way to be saved from God's Wrath is to be saved from the cause of it; take away the cause and the effect ceaseth: The cause of God's Wrath being kindled against Man is Sin, for God had no Wrath against Man when he first made him; for he made him after his own Image, and gave him Power to continue in that Holiness and Righteousness, wherein he created him; but he fell, and was cast out of Paradise, and an Angel was sent *with a Flaming Sword that turned every way, to keep the Way of the Tree of Life*. Thus Man fell under the Wrath of God by his Sin; but how shall I have the Wrath of God allayed? By breaking off from Sin, and returning to God again.

This looks like a Covenant of Works, say some; do you say I must break off from Sin and so escape the Wrath of God?

Yes.

Yes, I do; but no mortal Man can break off from Sin but by joining with the Mediator, *He is the Author of Eternal Salvation, he worketh in us to will and to do, and enableth us to work out our own Salvation*; it was Sin that drove Man out of Paradise, and brought upon him the wrath of God. Sin is the Devil's work; now that Christ might be a Saviour to us, he will destroy the Devil's work, for this purpose saith the Apostle, *the Son of God was manifested that he might Destroy the works of the Devil*. Now the Devil was not the Destruction of Man simply in himself, but by tempting him to Sin, which is the Devils work; now Christ was manifested to destroy the Devils work; that Propensity to Sin that is in the Nature of Man, which makes him rebel against the Mind and Will of God. Christ the Eternal Son of God he became Man, he took the Nature of Man, that he might bring Man again to his primitive state, wherein he was created after the Image of God.

Now how doth the Devil work his works doth he do his works co-ercively? No, he useth no irresistible force. But doth Christ the Mediator work co-ercively, with an irresistible power and force to bring a Man again to God? No, no more than the Devil did to bring a Man from God. Man might have stood and continued in his state of Innocence if he would; he might join with Evil, and yield to the Temptation of the Devil if he had a Mind; he knew if he gave over his Mind

to evil, he should be ruin'd ; and it proved so. Man was resolved to try what it was to yield to the Devil, and obey him. He told them that if they did eat of the forbidden Fruit they should be as Gods, but they became more like the Devil ; this they got by being obedient unto him, not that the Devil laid an irresistible force upon them, you shall eat of the Fruit of this Tree ; but there was only a presentation of it to them, and with that he prevailed, and so came the destruction of Mankind.

So Christ the Mediator, that he may present us to God, he comes and presents himself to us in his commands, and his command is that we must break off from that servitude and subjection that the Devil hath brought Man into, and there must be a yielding of subjection unto Christ ; we must believe in Christ, and hearken to the word of God, and break off from Sin ; But where is the Power ? If God would have me Holy, let him make me Holy ; if he would have me Pure, let him make me so, and give me ability to do that which of my self I cannot do ; when it pleaseth God to give me Grace and captivate my Will, I shall become a good Christian. Now here is a great mistake that People should think they must wait for an irresistible power to bring them back to God ; there is a presentation of love and mercy, and earnest invitations, and the long-suffering and patience and goodness of God's long waiting upon Sinners, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *God who Commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined*

ned into our Hearts, to give the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ. What shall I do with the Light that shines into my Heart? I will shut mine Eyes against it, I love Darkness rather than Light, and evil more than good; this Light will lead me to Holiness and Righteousness, I will quarrel with it, it comes to bereave me of my Comforts in this World, of my merry Companions, and of all my Bravery, I will not hearken to it. Who can help it; This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkness rather than Light, because their deeds are evil, saith our Saviour. If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had Sin, but now they have no Cloak for their Sin.

Here is the Gospel Preached by Christ himself, here is the presentation of an opportunity for every Man and Woman to return again; but I must be in the way of returning, that is, by joyning with that which presents it self with Holiness, with Righteousness, with Chastity and Humility, that presents and offers to the Soul all the Vertues and Graces that are in Christ, and shews it the Light and Grace that comes from Christ. Now this Light and Grace shewing it self to my Soul, I have a view of it. Hast thou a view of it? Hast thou seen Purity, Humility, Sobriety, Meekness, and Self-denial, and an Heavenly frame of Spirit in thy self or some body else? How dost thou like it? I like it not

at all; I love to have Honour and Dignity, Power and Dominion, and my Elbow-Room in the World; I love not this Meekness, Humility and strictness of Life, that a man must have a care what he speaks, and set a Watch upon his Lips, and upon his Heart and Tongue, and Hands, I do not like this kind of Life.

If thou dost not like a good Life, some body will like it and live in it; and for all your Vapouring, and Hating, and Despising it, when People come to live this kind of Life they will out-live thee; thy topping Life, thy reigning Life, and thy having Elbow-Room in the world will at last come to be limited; the Hand of God is against it, and it will bring down the Pride of Man: When thou comest to lie upon thy Dying Pillow, expecting every moment to expire, and breath thy last; then thou wilt wish, O that I had been more serious and lived more like a Christian, lived a Godly Life, and given up my Heart to God, and been more watchful over my Thoughts, and Words, and Actions. There is such a Friend of mine that hath lived better than I; if I had lived such a Life as he hath lived, I should have had more Comfort; And they that are despisers of the godly, they do not like such a Life now, but they will like it then.

Friends, you that are Lovers of your Souls, and meet together upon that account, of being better, and having Expectation, and Hope
that

that you shall receive Comfort and Benefit by your meeting together; I tell you as a Servant of God and a Lover of yours, it is but a little while and you will wish that you had chosen the most holy, harmless, innocent Life that ever you saw your selves, or heard of from any body else, and you will wish that you had been more watchful over your Thoughts, Words and Actions: There is a day, a Day a coming when we must give an Account for every thing that we have done, *whether good or evil*; you must give an account for your cursed Debauchery, for your Swearing, and Lying, and inordinate Passions; you must give an account for every vain Thought, and every idle Word.

If this will certainly come to pass, how shall I prevent these Idle Words and evil Actions? *Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way* (saith the Psalmist?) *by taking heed thereto, according to thy word.* I am not as those that say *Lo here and lo there*: I do not say, You must come and learn Truth of me, but if you find it, you must find it in your selves: What if I live in the Truth? that will not serve thee; and if I be a holy Man, that will not sanctifie thee; thou must hearken to Truth's speaking in thy self; thou mayest hear it speaking in thine own Heart before thou be an Hour older; you may hear it call you to Righteousness and Holiness; and if you hear it, you may do it too, if you please; for there is a Power that goes along with it.

I know

I know enough, thou wilt say, but I cannot do what I know; I have not Power. What ails thee that thou hast not Power? If I had Power then I would abstain from all Sin, and break off from my evil Ways; but the Devil throws this Object and the other Object in my Way, and by his Temptations he doth insnare me, I have not Power to resist: Would you have me do more than I can do? and as long as I have not Power I am to be excused.

Now here is a Device of the Devil to keep People in his Net still. If Men would be true to themselves, they would not be long without Power: If thou art convinced of the Evil of thy Ways, and that it is thy Duty to break off from Sin, there is a Power offered to thee, that if thou joyn with it thou mayest overcome all Temptations and forsake thy Sin: I would have you all prove, and search, and see whether I speak Truth or no; I am persuaded there is not a Man or Woman here but they have sometime abstained from an evil Work which they were tempted to. How were you restrained? because you knew it was an evil Work, you durst not do it; the Devil had not a coercive Power to force you to do it; I knew it was an evil thing, and I joyned with that in my Mind which dissuaded me from it; and I prayed to God to give me Power to abstain from it. The Devil tempted thee on still, who helped thee against the Temptation? God restrained thee by his Grace.

Will

Will not he be a present help unto thee? *He is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*; depend upon him still, and he will be always ready to help thee, and support thee, and strengthen thee, and thou shalt be kept from Sin in an Hour of Temptation: Consider that all Power in Heaven and Earth is given to Christ, and if he be able to keep thee thou shalt not fall into it; *those that come unto me, saith Christ, none shall pluck them out of my hands, and my father is greater than all*: If thou comest unto Christ he will in no wise cast thee out, and if thou depend upon him he will preserve thee, and *none shall be able to pluck thee out of his hand*. If thou joyn with the Truth, and with that which is holy, thou shalt have Strength and Ability to withstand Temptation and overcome it; and (I may speak with Reverence) Christ hath bound himself to those that trust in him, *Those that keep the word of my patience, I will keep them in the hour of temptation*: If I keep waiting upon his Power, that is ready to help me, and have a mind to be purified and sanctified, and to have Righteousness brought in to my Soul, and have mine Eyes unto God, and my Expectation from him, *he will work in me to will and to do of his good pleasure*.

Now here People have a fixed Foundation for their Faith; there is no working at this rate without bearing a daily Cross. There are a great many can receive the Truth in Words, and receive Doctrines, and Tenents

and that with Delight; but there is no practising Holiness and Righteousness without a daily Cross and Self-denial. There are a great many have come to Truth, as far as it stands in Words, but when it comes to something that they must do, to speak the Truth, and live in the Truth, they meet with so much of the Temptation of the Devil, so much Lust and Corruption, and Ungodliness in themselves, they meet with such evil things that their Souls joyn with and yield to, that they cannot go on in the ways of Holiness, unless they look up to Jesus, and have an Eye to their Saviour, and take up his Cross and follow him. Whatsoever Reproaches, and Sufferings, and Persecutions they endure, they must have a godly Resolution to follow the Lord Christ, and say, I will obey his Commands, he shall have the Rule and Government of my Life, and be the Guide of my way; whatsoever stands in my way I will take up my Cross and deny my self: Without this there is no good Christianity in the World.

There are a great many that seem to be religious and are Professors of the Truth: We all know there are many Professors of the Truth in Notion, and with some Zeal will talk of it; but they do not know how to live and walk in the Truth, they do not live uprightly and honestly in it; they do not keep their Words; they do not live justly and honestly with all Men, nor do unto others as they,

they would have others do to them: They can tell how to speak and act, then why do they not do it? They have got a Notion that they are above the Cross of Christ, and Self-denial is far below them: People will not live in the Truth.

This is wanting in the whole World: If we look into this City, we shall find a great many are illuminated; there is abundance of Knowledge and Understanding among Professors, abundance of Learning, and great Numbers of learned Men: What is the Reason that Oaths, and Curses, and all manner of Wickedness runs down the Streets like a River; there is Pride, and Wrath, and Envy, and Revenge, and Violence to be found among us, as if it would pull down Vengeance upon this City. They have heard preached in Pulpits much of Holiness and Humility, Patience and Meekness, *That a meek and quiet Spirit is an ornament of great price*: Men have heard much Preaching against Pride, Prophaneness, and Drunkenness, and Uncleanliness, but they have heard it *like a tale that is told*, not much concerned about it, and have given little Credit or regard to what they have heard of these things. Why are People so wicked? The Reason at last results into this, *Men are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*, they are not the servants of Christ, but serve divers lusts, and pleasures, and are led captive by the Devil, at his will, and so they go on in Iniquity. All the Law

of Kings and Queens cannot restrain and curb them, when the Law of Christ is not written in their Hearts; but when Men come to see a Necessity of Self-denial and taking up the Cross, this will produce a Reformation.

This is that I labour for, and all good Men and Women will do it: It is time to cry for Reformation. Vain Fashions, and Garbs, and Pride have been cried up, why should not we cry for Reformation before the Wrath of a provoked God is kindled against us, and his Vengeance poured down upon the Nation? We must reform our Lives. How shall Men reform, you will say? By getting the *law of God within their hearts*, that is pure, and holy, and heavenly, that will be *as a light to mens feet, and a lanthorn to their paths*: Now till People come to this they will go on in Sin and Iniquity till they be swept away with some overflowing and dreadful Judgment.

So that, my Friends, in the Fear of God, and out of love to you, I seek that you may be brought to God, through Christ; that you may live in the Love and Fear of the Lord, and, when you come to die, you may have Rest and Peace for your Souls. There is no Rest for those that are evil-doers; *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* The Ungodly cry, *Peace, peace*, and talk of Peace, but there is no Peace for them, but they shall have for their Portion *tribulation, and wrath, and anguish*; this shall certainly come upon every one that doth Evil. It is no matter what Religion

Religion you are of, if you do not obey the Truth, but live in Unrighteousness.

Now, Friends, my Exhortation to you all is, That you will return to the Truth in your own Hearts, and do it while you have time. I am not pulling and persuading People to love my Truth, but to love God's Truth in their own Hearts, to love it and obey it, and you cannot do this unless you resolve to take up a daily Cross, and be Followers of Christ, who is gone before to prepare a Place for them that are his true Disciples; and then he will present them to God, *as holy, harmless, and undefiled*, for these are Heirs of that everlasting Kingdom, *which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

S E R.

Sermon XII.

Christians should be often thinking on the Name of the Lord.

Preached at Devonshire-House, July 17th, 1692.

TH E People of God in former Ages, did think upon the Name of the Lord: I would it might be the daily Practice of all that make Profession to be the People of God in our Days, to think upon the Name of the Lord. This you know is an inward Exercise, invisible and known to none but God; he only knows when you are met together, whether you are thinking upon his Name, whether the Exercise of your Minds is upon his Power or upon whatsoever else your Minds are engaged. They whose Exercise and Desire is to feel God's Power, and to be acquainted with his Name, the Lord is nigh to them

them, to reveal his mighty Power and his Name to them, and they are a People that partake of his Goodness and of his Vertue and have an experimental Knowledge of the divers Administrations of both his Judgment and Mercies to their own Souls, and so they can proceed from Thinking to Speaking of the Goodness of God from the Experience that they have in themselves, that the Lord is good to them.

For all that some do in their manner of speaking of God and his Goodness, and crying up the Name of the Lord, it is all worth nothing, it is but Noise: But every one that partakes in his own Soul of something of the Divine Vertue and Goodness that flows from God invisibly to him through Jesus Christ, he hath Assurance in himself that he speaks the Truth: It is not mere Words made ready to his hand, but it is his own Knowledge and Experience of that which God hath wrought in him by his own Spirit: there are none that think upon the Name of the Lord, and his Power, and the working of it, but they are able to speak of it effectually and truly.

I know it hath been and is the practice among many, that they are able to speak of God's Goodness from what they find in his Writings and Sayings of some that lived before them, that did bear an honourable Testimony of God's Goodness in their Religion, and they learn to say it over again in the

particular Age: But what hath this Tale that they have told, wrought? This Report they have made, How God was with the Christians of old, the Primitive Christians and Martyrs; they have told a Tale of these things, and what hath it effected? It hath either brought forth Christians, or it hath not.

Therefore the way for People to be grounded and settled in divine Knowledge, is for every one to speak what they know: And if they know nothing of these things, to say nothing of them. And the way for them to come to receive divine Knowledge, is, by thinking, by meditating, by considering of that Converse that God hath with their own souls; for there is a way provided for all Men to converse with God that made them: Every Man and Woman may ask Questions of him, and may have Answers from him, if they have Patience enough to wait for them; every Soul here present, that shall come to be serious, and with seriousness of Mind shall ask of God what their State and Condition is, if they were to die presently, God will tell them, He will answer them; he will shine into them by the *Light of his Son Jesus Christ*, and let them know whether they are in the *land of bitterness and in the bonds of their iniquity* still, or whether they are redeemed out of it, and brought into Covenant with himself: But will you believe his Answer? I should have no Man go about to ask such a question of God unless he hath a mind to believe

lieve the Answer that God giveth him. To what purpose should Men ask, if they *ask and ask amiss*? If they ask without Faith, they do not believe except the Answer please them.

Many, in our Days, have put up their Petitions and Prayers to God, that he would discover to them the State and Condition of their Souls: The Lord hath answered them, that notwithstanding all the Profession that they have made of his Name, and of their Faith in his Son Jesus Christ, and of the Work of Redemption; yet he hath told a Man, Thou art still unredeemed, thou art still in thy Sin, and Lusts, and Concupiscence prevail over thee, thou art still in Bondage. This is God's Answer to many; but there is something ariseth in their Minds; that they are not willing to believe this; I would think better of my self than this: What if thou dost think better of thy self? Thou art never the better, *for the Word of the Lord stands sure*. There is no removing of it; there is no denial of the Truth. If this Truth condemn thee, all the World cannot justifie thee; and this Truth by which God condemns the Sinner is in the Sinner's own Heart: What will he do with it? It is in the Sinner's Conscience; it doth not only condemn him by Book, out of this Chapter and that Verse, out of this Author and the other Author, but he is condemned by God's true and faithful Witness, in his own Conscience. Thou wilt not believe it;

but

but if thou believest not this, then thou remainest in thy Unbelief of the Truth; and nothing else but believing it can save thee; No Counsell else can deliver or redeem thee.

So that the best Advise and Counsell that I can give a People, in this case is this; That when they come to such a religious Meeting as this is, they would come with a Mind prepared and fitted to think upon the Lord; to think upon his Name, and the way which he brings People to himself, for no Man can be called a Child of God that doth not partake of his Nature: If a Man be never so wise, and rich, and great in the World, if he be a Prince or an Emperour, without this he is a *Child of Wrath*: Now if these Children of Wrath meet with something that convinceth them; if they are touched and become a sensible People, then Crowns and Diadems are nothing to them: Such an one will say, If I be a *Child of Wrath*, a Captive to Sin and my own Lust and Concupiscence, yet for all that I will go to a religious Meeting, where I hope the Word of God will be preached; I hope to meet with something there that will do me good; and I have a Desire that I may be translated out of a natural State, from being a *Child of Wrath*, and to be brought into the Kingdom of God: If I have this Desire in me, God that made me wrought it in me, for by Nature we cannot so much as think a good thought: When Men think of being better, and of

amending their ways, and doing their Souls good ; these are very good Thoughts in themselves : When such Thoughts are begotten in any Men's Hearts, I would have them to ascribe them to the Grace of God, and nothing else ; Preachers may do much where these Desires are begotten, but it is not in their Power to beget these Desires.

Many have come to a Meeting with loose, prophane and wandring Minds, and though many good things have been spoken to them, it hath not reached so far as to beget good Desires, their Hearts have been so alienated from the Grace of God in themselves, which is the great superiour Worker, to which we are but Servants and Ministers ; there is none can beget any thing but he in whom all Power is. They that are under the Power of Darknes, the Devil begets in them Wantonness, and Vanity, Prophaneness and hardness of Heart. Some go away from a Meeting without being touched and perswaded, and they have no good Hope of being better : But where People are really touched in their Spirit, with a desire after something that will do them good, they must come to the Fountain of Good, the God that made them, and think upon him ; if they cannot *see his glory and hear his Voice*, yet they can think upon him. This is the least Duty of a Christian, to *think upon the Name of the Lord* ; and where there Minds are exercised about divine Matters, about the State and Condition of their

their poor Souls: If I die this Night, what will become of me? This and that Sin I have committed, how shall I be able to answer to God for one of a thousand of all my loose Thoughts, Words and Actions? They that come to a Consideration of this, and a due Sense of their State and Condition, though it is such a State that they do not like of, that it is not such as it ought to be; yet notwithstanding it may be better, they may be brought out of it into a better Condition.

Now this is the Duty of all, to be waiting upon God, the Fountain of all Good, that they may receive something from God, for *every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of Lights*, the Father of thy Light and my Light, that Light comes to us from the Father of Lights: If we have any perfect Gift bestowed upon us, it is bestowed by God; Therefore you will grant that we are all obliged, from the greatest to the least, to wait upon him, if we have the least Expectation from God, by a Meeting, otherwise we had better keep away.

But I am apt to judge that the most here are come with some Desire, that if it please God they may receive Benefit by their Meeting: Where shall they have it? They say, if such a Man preacheth, then I can edifie much by him: This is a great Mistake, for let who will preach there is no Body can receive any Benefit, but it must be from the Lord, as the Fountain of Good; for the best

best Preachers in the World are but Instruments in the Hands of God ; if God doth not bless his Labours, the Preacher can do nothing to the Souls of People ; he can sound the Truth in their Ears outwardly, but he can reach no further, God only speaks to the Heart. If thou mind the Preacher and not God that made thee, all his Preaching will do thee no good ; It may indeed help thee to a Notion or Speculation, but that comes not to the Inside, that will be no better, the Inside wants mending.

There are great Deformities, Scars, Spots, Stains, Wounds and Lameness upon the Souls of Men, by reason of their Sins, Lusts and Corruptions ; and there wants a Remedy, and there is no Physician of value but God that made us after his own Image. The Devil hath brought in Deformity, he hath made one proud, another cruel, another wanton, another an Oppressor, another malicious ; this is all the Devil's Work : And *for this end Christ Jesus came into the World, that he might destroy the works of the Devil.* He came to destroy Pride, Malice and Lust ; these are the Devil's Works, that Christ came to destroy : Why doth he not do it ? He will destroy all the Devil hath wrought in every Man that will be subject to him : Can a Chirurgeon set a Bone if the Patient be not subject to his Hand ?

But this is far beyond all comparison; Christ hath *received all power in heaven and earth*, yet he always looks for a willing People; he sends the Day of his Power upon a People, and he worketh upon their Hearts by an invincible Power; he makes they willing to be helped, and mended, and healed, and cured, and then he cures them. I dare say, there is not one here that is willing to be reformed, and to submit to Christ to be saved and redeemed by him, but he will do it; *He that is willing and obedient shall eat of the good of the land*, and shall know the Good of Redemption. See whether it be come to a State of Redemption; here is universal Grace offered; for the *light of Christ Jesus lighteth every one of you*; It shews you your lost State and Condition: When you see your Condition bad, that it is not as it ought to be; who would not have it better?

What means Prayer, that Christian Duty? So it is: What shall we pray for? Must not People be sensible in themselves what they should pray for, before they come to pray? And what is it that will make them sensible but the Light and Grace of God? They see their own Wants when God worketh Faith in their Hearts, and they believe that God can supply those Wants. Why should I go to a Beggar, to pray him to give me an hundred Pounds? I believe he cannot do it, therefore I will not pray to him for it: Now necessity brings People to go to Prayer, but

there must be Faith in him to whom we pray, that he is able to supply their Wants, and relieve their Necessities. Upon this account the Apostle saith, *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* He must first know that there is a God to come unto, and then that he is a Rewarder.

Here is the Foundation of all true Religion and true Worship; they that go to God and say their Prayers, and join with others in saying their Prayers, if they have no sense of God, they had as good hold their Tongues, for their Praying is to no purpose: They that pretend to believe in God, without an experimental Power of God working upon their Hearts, their Belief is not worth a Straw; without their Respect to the Power of God, all their Belief is nothing; but if they know that God hath such an Operation upon them, that no Man or Woman in the World can discover that to them, that God discovereth, then they know that God is *the searcher of hearts and the trier of the reins,* Jeremiah 17. 10.

Suppose I know that there is a God, and at the same time I believe that he will never hear me; that I am a reprobate Creature, and that he hath cast me off for ever, and that he hath sealed Condemnation upon me, to all Eternity. What reason hath such a one to pray? This is a desperate Condition. But while we believe there is a God, and that he

is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,
it is not in vain to pray; yet there is something antecedent too to Prayer; there is Knowledge, and Faith upon that Knowledge, that God is a Rewarder: He that hath this, let him pray in God's Name. But what must he pray for? He must *not offer the sacrifice of fools*; he must have regard to his Lips; if it be mental Prayer, he must pray for that he stands in need of; it is for something he prays, that God hath revealed by his Holy Spirit, he stands in need of; it is for something that he needs, it is Power to overcome Corruption, and Power to overcome Temptation, that he stands in need of; he stands in need of a Mediator to procure for him the Pardon of his Sins: These things he stands in need of, then let him pray; *He that is afflicted let him pray.*

So that if a Man or Woman go to Prayer, they must pray to God, in the Belief of his Goodness and Mercy, that he will bestow some Blessing upon them, that may be for the better, that may be for their good. When they come to a Meeting, to worship God, and hear the Word spoken outwardly, they must pray for something that may be for their good; Lord give me something that may support my Soul, and something that may withstand Temptation. People should have their Minds thus exercised, and they should think upon the Name of the Lord, according to their particular Necessity; they should

pour out their Supplication to the Lord. This is such Worship as God looks for, and such as he likes and is pleased with; he will deliver those that thus pray to him out of Temptations, so that they shall not prevail over them: One Man's Temptation is of one sort, and another's of another sort; but they are all delivered by the Grace of God, and helped over them, upon their Prayer to God, for they find by Experience that *God is a God hearing prayers.*

Now, when we have prayed, what is the next Work? It is to wait for an Answer of our Prayer. I prayed the other Day to God for Power to withstand such a Temptation; when that Temptation comes again I do expect that God will answer my Prayer. Dost thou so? Then I pray thee have an Eye to the same Grace of God that convinced thee, and shewed thee the Temptation, and have thy Faith exercised upon that Grace of God, and thou wilt find it sufficient for thee, I will warrant thee: Let the Devil come with a Temptation never so suitable and subtil, keep thine Eye upon the Grace of God, and it will deliver thee. This was the Case of Paul, when a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him, he besought the Lord thrice: The Temptation did attend him, and God gave him an Answer of his Prayer; *My Grace is sufficient for thee.* As if he had said, Let the Devil come with never so much Power he shall never overcome thee.

I speak

I speak to those that are well skill'd in this kind of Work, and have met with sharp Temptations, and sometimes perhaps they have been overcome by them, and at other times they have withstood them: What is the difference, why one while they are loose and careless, and did not pray for the Assistance of Divine Grace; another while they kept close to it, and were delivered?

Therefore when you come to Meeting, with a Desire to receive Benefit from God, with your Expectations God-ward, to receive Comfort from the Hands of the Lord, let your Eye be upon him, and the working of his Grace in your own Hearts, and hearken to that Voice that is within you, and it will be more effectual than mine. If you find the Work of Grace in you to be the same thing that I speak of, then believe me for the Truth's-sake; believe me because you find the same Work and Testimony within yourselves. And I am perswaded there is never a one here, but sometime or other they have withstood that Temptation which they have met withal. Pray tell me how they did it? Why, the Temptation came unto me, and it pleased God to shew me the Evil of it; that it was a bad thing if I yielded to it. How! didst thou resist it, had not the Devil a coercive Power over thee, to force thee to it, whether thou wouldst or not? That God that shewed me the Evil of it, delivered me from the Evil of it; I was not judged and condemned

demned in my self, because I found my self delivered from it; there are none of you, if you would not be lazy and idle, but you might be delived every Day, and have Experience in your own Souls, that when the Devil comes and tempts, the Lord is at hand to deliver you by his Grace and Power.

So that the only way for People to be preserved from Sin and Iniquity, is to have a reverent respect to that Grace of God which they have already received. I would have that taken out of your Head, that vain Conceit that hath long reigned in the World: When you see a wicked Husband, Wife, or Child, you say, If they had Grace they would be better; I say they have some degree of Grace already; God hath sent forth his Grace and Truth, to *teach men to deny ungodliness*, so that I would not pray that God would give my Husband, Wife, or Child, or Friend Grace, but that he would break his hard Heart, that he may submit to the Grace of God that is already bestowed upon him. I believe there is not a Graceless Person here that is utterly void of all Grace; but they walk not according to it, they trample upon it: For every one being endued with a measure of Grace, through Christ, our Duty therefore is to have a reverend regard to the Grace of God, that we have received.

What Grace have I received from God, may some one say?

I have

I have received so much Grace from God (thou maist truly say) that I can tell when the Devil brings a Temptation to me; that when he tempts me to Uncleanness, Theft, Wrath, Malice, or to deceive my Neighbour, I have so much Grace that I can tell I am tempted in such a respect; the Grace of God shews me this is a Temptation of the Devil: But the Question is, Whether I am subject to the Grace of God, and do love his Grace better than the Profit or Pleasure of a Temptation? It comes as a Bait, but the Devil cannot make me do that which he tempts me to; it is not in the Power of all the Devils in Hell, or of his Servants on Earth to make me do this evil thing: The Light of my own Conscience shews it to be a Temptation. Now I am free and at my Choice, whether I will love the Profit and Pleasure that comes with the Temptation more than the Grace of God: I believe there is no Body that hath been tried by a Temptation but they can say so: I leave it to him *that searches and tries all your hearts, and knows your thoughts*, to judge whether you joined with the Temptation, that you might have the Profit and Pleasure of it, or joined with his Grace, that might have resisted the Temptation: You that have done the one and the other, tell me which is the best Bargain? When you have joined with the Temptation that you might have the Profit and Pleasure of it that came along with it, or when you joined with the Grace
of

of God, that shewed you the Evil and Danger of the Temptation; The same God speaks to you that spake to Cain, *If thou dost well shalt not thou be accepted? And if thou dost not well sin lies at the door.* If thou hast yielded to a Temptation *sin lies at the door*, there is a Breach made between God and thy Soul.

The same Man at another time, having smarted so deeply for it, being judged by his own Conscience, when he meets the Temptation again, he saith, Let the Profit or Pleasure go where it will, if I yield to this Temptation I cannot go to God but as a Thief to a Judge; Let the Profit or Pleasure be what it will I will not touch with this Temptation. Can the Devil force thee to comply with this Temptation? No, if thou be true to the Grace of God in thy own Heart, it will make thee able to resist the strongest Devil in Hell. Christ hath purchased for the Sons and Daughters of Men a Power to withstand the Devil's Power, and all his Devices and Temptations, and you shall obtain Victory, and have Dominion over them. If you have a mind to grow in this Dominion, when the Devil comes to tempt you resist him, and you shall, through the Power of Christ, be enabled to overcome.

If Satan tell thee of the Profits and Pleasures of this World; tell him, That *the world passeth away, and the lust of it*, but Peace with God endures for ever: By the Grace of God

God you will be able to overcome the Devil and all his Angels. This Power is given to all that believe and obey the Gospel: If you would have Benefit by it, you must be exercised in the resisting of Temptation, and have regard to the Grace of God, and the Workings of it in your own Hearts; and then you will be able to say, when a Temptation comes, promising Profit and Pleasure, *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?* Turn your Eye to God's favour, which is better than life, and you will be more than conquerors; you will say the Fear of God seized upon my Soul, and the Grace of God came in to my Assistance, and made me stand like a Bulwark against Temptation. Here Praises will go up to God; here will be occasion for thee to speak good of his Name. Remember what David said, *My Soul praise the Lord that hath delivered me from the horrible Pit:* Thus David and the Saints of old praised God in their Day; and why should not we? They breathed forth living Praises and Thanksgivings for the Deliverances wrought for them; and shall not we do it?

Now this cannot be done without thinking upon his Name, the Name of that God that made us: Here I live in the World, I live and breathe still, I have Health, and Strength, and an Estate, how came I by all this? Did I make my self? No, there is a God that gave me Life, and Breath, and Being; he holds forth the Hand of Mercy to gather

ther

ther me to himself, and to *redeem me from all*
iniquity, that I might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness all the days of my
life: If I believe all this, I shall rejoyce in
 him, and love and praise him, and daily wait
 upon him for the Accomplishment of his
 Work. *He desireth not the death of sinners:*
 If you will believe the Almighty, it is im-
 possible for him to lie, all things are possible to
 him except that; he saith, *He would not the*
death of him that dies: What would he have
 then? He would have you *turn and live:*
 What means doth he use? What I would
 have done I would use means for it. You
 would say, What means doth God use? I am
 ready to say, What means hath he not used?
 What is it that God doth more wish for than
 that Men would repent, *return and live,* and
 be happy for ever? He hath created them,
 and given them Life and Breath, and conti-
 nued them twenty, thirty, forty or fifty Years,
 that they might have time to prepare for
 Eternity; and he hath given his good Spirit
 to instruct them, *but they have rebelled against*
him: He hath sent forth his Word, the Gos-
 pel of Salvation, which hath been preached
 to them; and *he hath waited to be gracious,*
and exercised much patience and long-suffering
towards them; so that I may say, what means
 hath he omitted? *He hath planted them as a*
vineyard in a very fruitful hill; and he hath
 fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof,
 and planted it with the choicest vine, and built

a tower in the midst of it, and made a wine-press therein, and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought wild grapes. Judge, I pray you saith the Lord, between me and my vineyard: What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?

But notwithstanding all your unfruitfulness, the Day of your Visitation is continued, the Lord is willing to shew Mercy to your Souls. This is all the Lord your God requires of you, That you would think upon his Name, believe in him and trust in him, and wait upon him for the Operations of his Grace in the use of his Ordinances and your Attendance upon them,, and hearkning to his Voice, and obeying it, and so to hear that your Souls may live.

I will affirm, that there is never a one of you here present, whether you be Quakers or no, but you may meet with the Divine Operations of the Power of God in your own Hearts, if you will regard it, and when you meet with these Operations and regard them not, I cannot help it; if you will resist the good things of the Spirit of God, I cannot help it; if you will be of that Mind, *always* resist the Holy Ghost; if as your Fathers did do ye, then you must all perish, both you and your Fathers; there is no escaping but by being subject to Christ Jesus, and his quickening Spirit; if there be any Divine operations that you meet with in your own Hearts,

Hearts, let me perswade you to submit and have regard to them; for I know the Devil is near at Hand; and when People meet with Divine Operations in their Souls that humble them and bring down their Pride, and convince them of the danger of their condition, he lies in the way and suggests some poisonous thing that takes off the edge of these Operations, that they may dislike them; It is true, they meet with Convictions of Sin; but they reckon they have that Faith and Belief in Christ, that doth in the sight of God obliterate all their Sins that can be laid to their charge, both past and to come. If I would look, say they, to the Divine Operation, or any thing wrought in me, it were enough to make me mad. I look wholly to the Merits of Christ; my Mind is wholly fixed upon him who is *the Author of Eternal Salvation*; his meritorious Sufferings and Obedience can obliterate and blot out all my Sins.

My Friends, I tell you, many a poor Soul hath split upon this Rock, by undervaluing the Divine Operations of the Spirit upon their Hearts; they make a false and wrong application of the Merits of Christ, which indeed are so great that no body can overvalue them; but we must not make a false application of them, *For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil*; He takes away the guilt of Sin, not that you might live in it still: Whosoever believeth in Christ, shall have Power over their

their Sins and not be under the Dominion and Power of Sin; Sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the Law, but under Grace. But God be thanked you were the servants of Sin; but you have obeyed from the Heart, the form of Doctrine which was delivered you: Being then made free from Sin, ye became the Servants of Righteousness, Rom. 6. 14, 18.

But you will say, I am guilty of a great deal of Sin already, what shall become of me for the guilt I have contracted?

If we confess and forsake our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness; and the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin; John 9. 9. Here is a true Application of Christ his Merits and Righteousness; when there is a confessing of Sin to God, and a forsaking of it, here is an Offering and a Sacrifice made to God by our Lord Jesus Christ for the expiation of Sin; he hath by his precious Blood purchased the pardon of all my Sins, that he might present me to God without Spot and Blemish; here is a true Application of the Righteousness of Christ; but how can I apply it to my self while I live in Sin?

Here God's Witness in the Conscience of a Sinner pleads against the Sinner; when he hath got a trick to believe that his guilt is taken away, and all his Sins, past, present and to come are pardoned, while he continue to live in Sin, and Sin hath yet dominion over him.

Take

Take heed you split not upon this Rock if you be humble, well grown Christians, you will think upon the Name of the Lord; and when ye find the Operation of God's Power begetting good Desires in you to hate Sin and love Righteousness, you will then believe you will then pray to the God of all Grace for the Prayer of the Faithful is acceptable to him: *The effectual fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man avails much, Jam. 5. 16.*

Let your Supplications therefore be poured forth unto God, to endue you with Power and Wisdom to subdue all your Spiritual Enemies, and to conquer your Concupiscence and the inordinate Desires and Affections of your own Hearts, that you may take up the Cross of Christ and follow him as your great Pattern, and in his Name, and by the Help and Assistance of his Holy Spirit you may know how to overcome all Temptations.

His Prayer after Sermon.

Most Glorious Lord God, wonderful is thy great Power over all, which thou hast revealed and made manifest in this thy blessed Day. Thy Arm O thou Almighty God is stretched forth; thou hast touched a Remnant with a Sense of thy Divine Love, whom thou hast gathered unto thy Name; thou hast revealed thy great Salvation, and therewith thou hast made glad the Souls of thy Children; thou hast endeared thy self unto us by the dis-

covery

every and manifestation of thy abounding love, who didst love us, when we were strangers, and preserve us when we were enemies, and brought a glorious Day of visitation upon us, and opened our Eyes to behold the Light thereof, so that we were an engaged People to speak good of thy Name: thou hast declared and manifested to the Sons and Daughters of Men thy good Will and thy universal Grace that thou art daily extending to them, that all may be made Partakers of the Riches of thy House, and of thy great salvation which by the Lord Jesus Christ thou hast ordained: And O thou Powerful God of life, since the Day that thou first gathered us, thou hast been with us, thou hast been our Guide, and our Eyes have been towards thee for Instruction? thou hast taught us and led us in the way in which thou wouldst have us to walk; thou hast led us O Lord in the way Everlasting with the poor, the humble and the meek of the Earth; and thou hast placed our Feet, O Lord, near the Everlasting Mountain, which thou hast exalted upon the high Hills of the Earth, and thou hast revealed the Glory and the splendor of thy house, thy Holy Dwelling Place, and hast quickened Breathings in the Hearts of thy People, that they may dwell in thy Courts for ever: and now, Holy Father, thou hast gathered a remnant, and brought a peculiar People to trust in thy Name; but still we do all that thou do by thee; thou must be our Keeper, thou must

must be our Preserver, therefore we wait upon thee, we expect all from thy Hand, therefore our Applications are unto thee, that from Day to Day, and from time to time, we may find thy living Presence in the midst of us. And O living God of Life, thou hast given thy Children large Experience that thou art a God nigh at hand to us in all our Trials, in all our Exercises; as our Eyes have been turned to thee, thou hast preserved us and revealed thy Heavenly Power, O Lord, in preserving and delivering thy Church and People, that they may bear a Testimony in their Generation for thy great Love, and the great Salvation that thou hast wrought for them and made them Partakers of. Now Blessed God of Life, the Desires and Supplications of thy People are unto thee, for the glorifying of thy Power and the exalting of thy glorious Name: O Lord let the mighty Operation of thy Power bow down all stout and stubborn Ones, that have rebelled against thee, and that have withstood the Tenders of thy Grace, and the Motions and Striving of thy Holy Spirit: Thou art able to bow them, and to break their stony Hearts; thou art able to speak effectually to their Souls, and to make them submit themselves to thee, Holy and living Father, let the progress of thy Word and Gospel be great in our Day; let it have a free course and spread it self mightily to those that believe not, to beget a Seed of Faith in their Souls, that they may believe in thy Name,

and

and Trust in thy Power, and wait to see the great Work of Redemption wrought for the Salvation of Immortal Souls, before the Day of Visitation goes over. Powerful God of Life, thy little Remnant which thou hast Redeemed keep them by thy Power, and preserve them in Uprightness and Cleanness of Mind; preserve them in the places and stations wherein thou hast appointed them to dwell, and in all their Trials, and Tribulations, and Distresses, that may come upon them, that they may be quiet and still, and in Patience possess their Souls; and let them have strong Consolation in that Everlasting Covenant which in thy Son thou hast made with them, and revealed to them; and let them not be moved and tossed with the hurries of this World, with the Tumults and disorders that evil Men make in it, and the Storms and Tempests that are raised; but let their Hearts and Minds be stayed upon thee, that they may know how to behave themselves towards thee and one another, and towards all that are without, and thereby glorifie and magnifie thy great Name by the Beauty of Holiness shining in their Conversations, which may reach the Consciences of Men, that all that see them may say, These are the Plants that the Right Hand of God hath planted, and see the Fruits that are brought forth from that Root of Life revealed in Christ Jesus. Powerful God of Life, carry on thine own Work in this City and the whole Nation,
and

and in other places among that People which thou hast chosen and gathered to thy self out of the World : Powerful God of Life remember those that groan in secret, making their moan to thee, that they cannot lay hold of thy Salvation for their Souls : Prepare them for that Consolation that their Souls are breathing after : They are Night and Day wrestling with thee by earnest Prayer : But what will all their wrestling signifie, except thy Word and the Power of thy Grace assist them, and teach them to lay hold of thy Strength, that they may fight the good Fight of Faith, that they may get the Victory, and rejoyce in thy Salvation, and see the Glory of it? Thou seest how the Children of Men are working and contriving divers ways for their own Salvation; make them to know that all their own ways and invention are in vain. Blessed God of Life, confound the Devices of the Ungodly that seek to lay waste thy Heritage; and all those that thou hast gathered by thy Word, do thou preserve them, that they may serve thee with sincere and upright Minds all the Days of their Lives; and offer up daily Thanksgivings and living Praises to thee, the true and living God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, and thy Eternal Spirit, who alone art worthy, who art God over all, blessed for ever and ever, *Amen.*

Sermon I.

Christ the Way to Eternal Life.

Preach'd at Grace-Church-street, May the
6th 1688.

THE Desire of all Nations is come, that which all People desire in their own way, is come in God's way; for all Nations and all People on the Earth, they desire Eternal Life, they would all be happy in the other World, and in order thereunto, they have fitted themselves with divers Ways and Methods, in which they have proposed to themselves the Enjoyment of Eternal Life; but by reason of the Darkness that is in them, they have erred in their ways, they have been scattered, they have been driven and tossed hither and thither, and can never agree about the Way that leads to Eternal Life.

This comes by reason of the great Darkness that is come over the Sons and Daughters of Men in general, in which they have lost their way, and are endeavouring to find it again: But the subtil Adversary he led them

2 *Christ the Way to Eternal Life.*

them out of the way, and as long as he leads and they follow, they shall never be sure to find the right way: The great Calamity that is come upon the World in this respect, is very greatly to be lamented; for when the Eye of the Mind is opened, to behold the universal State of Mankind, and to see how they are scattered hither and thither, and composed and made up of heaps by the Craft and Delusion of the wicked One, and that none of the Ways that they have found, are like to bring them to the proposed End, because they are defiled, because they are unholy. This hath bowed down the Spirit of the Lord's Servants many times, and a great Cry hath risen in the Hearts of those that have had the Fruition and Enjoyment of Life Eternal; O that the Sons of Men might hear, and O that they might consider their ways before they come to their latter End; for mark Friends, this you may take for a certain Doctrine, and a sure Rule in Judgment, concerning all the ways that the Sons and Daughters of Men walk in; *If they be unholiness, they will be unprofitable*; the way of the Lord was, and is, and ever will be the way of Holiness, and they People that walk therein, they were, and are, and they will always be holy People, Now the Sons and Daughters of Men have not gone to measure their Way by this Rule, but the greatest endeavour that ever hath been in the World, ever since I have known the World, and believe

Christ the Way to Eternal Life.

3

believe before; the greatest Endeavours that Men did undertake, was, to see how near they could approve their Doctrines and Practices with the Scriptures of Truth, and that hath been the Bone of Contention, that they have stumbled about from one Generation to another, one crying my Way is right; and here they have been contending, disputing, and jangling and debating one with another, and could never agree, and could never come to an understanding with is given by the Holy Spirit, which moved holy Men to write the Holy Scriptures of Truth; if they had, it is manifest they would have agreed, for this one Spirit must agree with itself, and will give Judgment according to its own Righteous Judgment; Men being alienated from the Life of God, by evil Works, and by the Suggestions of Satan, they have not known the Way of Peace, and have not come to that which is the Desire of all Nations, as now in the fulness of time, the Lord God Eternal, who created the Heavens and the Earth, the Sea and the Fountains of Water; he hath looked down and beheld the miserable Calamitous State of the Sons and Daughters of Men, and he hath seen how they have been scattered and driven to and fro by Idol Shepherds, and how every one hath indulg'd himself in his own Way, though unholy and impure; and it is because of the Darkness of the Night of Ignorance that hath been over the People; and there-

fore in his infinite Love and Mercy, he is risen and hath brought forth his Light and his Truth, that the Nations might be enlightned, that they might come and see with a Divine Eye that the Truth is but one, and the Way but one, and all that do really desire to be Inheritors of Eternal Life must come to walk in that Way: So that People are never brought back again out of that way wherein they have been sattered and driven about, 'till they come to see the way they practice do bring forth Iniquity, they see there is no Light is to be had in them, they see the Anger of God kindled, and the Indignation of God poured out by reason of Sin and Unholiness. Now when they come to be convinced by the Light of Christ Jesus of their Disobedience, then they come to feel and find a Principle, a Seed and Root that gives them a Law which they should obey, and hear the right Law-giver, and have respect unto him: Here is the Revelation of Christ Jesus by his Spirit, and this extends it self in its Operation and Working to the Sons of Men, to them that are afar off, as well as to those that are nigh; therefore our continual Exhortation, from time to time, according as the Spirit hath given us Utterance, is not so much to make Profession of this and the other Doctrine of Christianity, as to perswade all Men every where, that they believe in the Light, and hearken to the Voice of the Light in their own Consciences, that they hearken to that

Christ the Way to Eternal Life. 3

that which is purely of God in themselves, as we know, whosoever comes to love the Light of Christ Jesus, wherewith they are enlightened, it would discover Doctrine to them, and make known Faith and Practice too, it will lead them in the way Everlasting, it will open their Understanding far above all Preaching and proving this and the other Doctrine and Tenet, better than any Preaching can: What signifies it to shew Colours to the Blind, or to speak Words to the Dead; 'till Men come to have their Senses opened, that they may discern things belonging to the Spirit of Truth, the carnal Man cannot understand the things of the Gospel of Christ, the Carnal Mind is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be; there must be something done in the Soul, to bring it out of its Carnality, and bring it to something that is Spiritual, before it is capable of understanding the things of the Spirit: Therefore when ever ones Mind can witness we came hither, wherefore we are met here upon the Service and Worship of God, with a Hope we have expecting to receive some Illumination, some Refreshment, some Comfort, or some Knowledge of things Divine; it is in vain to attend Religious Doctrines with an Irreligious Mind. It is my Judgment of Charity, that every one that comes hither, hath some expectation of Illumination in the Understandings, or some Gift, some Instruction; this they may receive from

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the God of Heaven, by the Ministry of those who must be the Mouth of God, to speak to them in his Name: When People are thus prepared, and their Minds fixed to hear the Truth; if they do not find it in themselves, if they come not to a Sense of the Word of Life in their own Hearts, their Hearing cannot give them Life. We are commending our selves to every Man's Conscience; let your Minds be turned inward, search and consider, is there a Light enlightens every Man that comes into the World? Is there a Desire of Eternal Life manifested in me? Is there that in me that puts me upon Obedience to God, and to mend my Life and Conversation, that I might be recommended to God? Is there something in me that speaks to me when I speak amiss, and do amiss? I do appeal to the Witness of God in you; If that be so, then believe me for the Work's sake, the Testimony of God in your Hearts. Let us next consider whether we had best agree on this Conclusion, that God hath enlightened us, and whether we had not best obey that Light; this is the best way, let us put the Question, and wait for an Answer from ourselves. There is much indeed to be said on the other side: If I should hear and obey that by which I am enlightened, If I should hearken to the Reproof of my own Conscience, I should lose a great deal of the Pleasure and of the Comfort of the World, I should lose a great deal of the Profit which I gain in my

my Trade and Calling, and of the Delight and Pleasure I have with my Neighbour. That is not to be denied, I would have things put in the Ballance; I grant you will lose some Pleasure, and ungodly Gain, and the Friendship of the World; but pray consider, and let us go through the account: If thou obeyest this Light of Christ Jesus, this is God's way of drawing thee nearer to himself, to make thee an Heir of his Eternal Kingdom; whereas by thy indulging thy carnal Parts, thou wilt lose thy Immortal Soul; if thou couldst gain the whole World, and lose thy own Soul, what will it profit thee? Thou shouldst consider, why I am enlightened; How comes it to pass that my Nature is Evil, and I am fallen from my Primitive State, from the Knowledge of God, and from the Enjoyment of his Presence, and Communion with him? How comes God to take notice of me, and to enlighten me and kindle in me a Desire of returning to him? why should he do this for me? Thou wilt never find a reason in thy self of this extraordinary Kindness, of this singular Mercy of God to thee; it is because his Mercy moved him, and it was his Compassion that stirred him up: He hath sent his Son Jesus Christ into the World, that Men might have Light in and through him, and have it abundantly. The Mercy of God is a Fountain from whence all this flows to us; if this prevail not upon thee, no Argument will: What was it meer Mercy, meer

Grace, that God was not willing to see me perish, and run headlong to Destruction? He was loth to execute his Wrath upon me; therefore he found out a way by which I might return to him: This made a good Man cry out, Behold what manner of Love is this wherewith the Father hath loved us? Here is the Grace of God, here is the good Will of God, here is the Way, a Way, what Way? A way of coming to God, a way of being again reconciled unto God, whom we had provoked by our Sins; a way of enjoying Eternal Life again, after we had lost all pretence to it. The next Question is, Who will walk in the Way that leads to Eternal Life; we would all have Eternal Life, it is the unversal Consent of all Nations, all would have Eternal Life; but the Question is, Who will walk in the Way that leads to it? Some of the Nations round about, and many in this Nation, they will walk in their own Way, and yet they would have Eternal Life; but their Way must be of the same Nature and Quality with the Life they would have; if the way they walk in be not of the same Nature and Quality, it will not lead to it: Let every one examine their Way, let every one examine their Progress, and their Lives and Footstepts in this World; if they sow to the Flesh, they shall of the Flesh reap Corruption; and if they sow to the Spirit, they shall of the Spirit reap Life Everlasting; a suitable Fruit to that Life they live, and their

Way

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Way they walk in: If we conclude with Reason, with pure sound Reason, we must conclude it is better for us all that walk in the way of Holiness; and we shall have more reason to believe that we shall have Life Eternal, than in walking in an unholy Way, therefore we should be resolved to walk in the Way of Holiness; and if People are brought to this, it an easie thing to draw them to Confession: You say true, it is better to walk in a Holy Way than an Unholy Way; but alas, we have not Power so to do, we are feeble and weak, and dark and ignorant; and we have many Lusts, Temptations and Impediments lying in our way, that it is not possible for any to walk in that Way; we know the Way, the Way we understand it well enough; you would have us walk by the Light of Christ, and the Dictate of our own Consciences, then we should never be condemned for any thing we do, but we should stand in an opennes of access to God; when a Man sinneth against God, Sin lies at the Door; but they that sin not, have an access to God: Alas, these things cannot be done: what can a poor Creature do that wants Power? My Friends, this Excuse must go no further than it can; let us try and consider in the Presence of God this Day, the Powerful God that is the Assister of his People; let us try how far this will go, I have no Power of my self; all good Men grant it to be true, you have not Power to walk in the way of

B b 5 Holiness.

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Holiness: But let us ask another Question: Doth God require of thee and me to walk in the way of Holiness, and doth he detain Power from us to walk in it? We cannot walk in the Way of Holiness, but by the Operation of his Power working in us, unto the extinguishing of the Life of Sin and Corruption, that hath hindred us all this while; God knows we cannot do it our selves: Christ tells his Disciples, without me ye can do nothing, nothing good, nothing that is right. This being concluded of, all Power comes from God, the next Question is, how, and which way must we receive Power from God greater than our own Power? Which is the way of Peoples receiving Power from God? You have read how People came to have Power; *To as many as have believed, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God:* What signifies this to them that do not believe? If believing be the way to obtain Power, it is nothing to those that do not believe, there Faith is necessary, in the first place, for obtaining of this Power: This is a great Mystery, such an odd Saying, that the World knows not what to make of it; Believers, we are all Believers; I believe the Truth of the Principles of the Christian Religion, and I believe all the Articles of the Creed: To talk of believing at this time of the day, we have believed this Twenty, or Thirty or Forty Years, but the first act of Faith is yet to be done after your Sense: It is true, with

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the greatest part of the Nation, the first act of Faith is not yet begun, for their Faith is Mens Faith; for we are for the Faith that was delivered to the Saints, it is the Gift of God, it comes from the Operation of God; so that I may conclude, whosoever remains a Stranger to the Operation of God, he is a Stranger to the true Faith, and whosoever estrangeth himself from that which God worketh, they are Strangers to the Operation of God: Therefore 'till Peoples Minds are turned to Christ, whom God hath sent, who is appointed to be for Salvation to the ends of the Earth; 'till Men come to reduce the Government both of the Soul and Body, to him as the Captain of their Salvation, 'till they come to be thus resigned, they cannot come to the true Faith. Now God worketh this Resignation in us; then a Man will reflect upon himself and say, Alas I have been mine own Keeper too long, I see I have gone off from God, now I will return to him, and resign up my self to the Lord, that he may work in me what he pleaseth to work: When Men come to this Resignation of Soul, they have Faith given them, they must believe God will never leave me nor forsake me, but he will magnifie his Power in my Weakness; I will roll my Soul upon him, and cast my Care upon him that careth for me; it is not Faith barely in Words, and in the Articles of the Creed, but it is a Faith in the Son of God, to whom all Power in Heaven and Earth.

Earth is given; I may expect a share of it; he will give me a little, if I come to him for it; and if I be faithful in a little, he will give me more; the reason why you want Power, is, because you want Faith; and the reason of your want of Faith, is, because you want a Resignation to the Will of God; you will be your own Carver, and your own Keeper and Guide: When you come to this Resignation to the Will of God, God will give you Power, and then you will find him the God of all Grace; you are what you are by the Grace of God, and by his Power, and by that Power you will obey his Will: Here is Faith that giveth Glory to God, to that God that takes an Unholy Man and makes him Holy; how doth he this? By his Holy Spirit, which is as Fire that burneth up that which is Corruptible; then the Man is well (I speak according to the Dictates of the Spirit) when he is reconciled to God by Christ Jesus, the Mediator between God and Man, the Mediator of the New Covenant, who maketh our Peace, that you may come to the Knowledge of the Day of the Lord's Visitation: That is it which our Souls labour and travel for, that you may be in the Unity of the same Spirit after the Desire of all Nations is come; he is come to you, that you may all say within your selves, *Salvation this Day is come to our Houses, and into our Hearts.*

Sermon II.

Christ All in All.

*Preach'd at Devonshire-House, June the
10th, 1688.*

THE Lord Jesus Christ is the Light,
Life and Vertue that can only satisfie.
Christ is all in all.

There is nothing can satisfie the Souls of the Upright, unless they feel *Life* and *Vertue* to flow from Christ Jesus; and this, whether it flow Instrumentally or Immediately, always Comforteth; it always Refresheth the Upright in Heart.

Therefore all they that desire Satisfaction to their Souls, that meet together upon that Account, they ought to have their Eyes turned to the Lord, that they may be capable to understand the Ministration of the Spirit, whether in themselves, or through any other. For while they are exercised outwardly, and the Dependence of their Souls is upon that which is outward, there remains a *Vail* upon the Mind, that they many times hear excellent things spoken of the Kingdom of God, but they understand them not, because they are
Alienated.

Alienated and Estranged in their Minds from *that* of God in themselves, that should give them an Understanding. We never pretended to give People an Understanding, we have always said, That is the Work of God. We have spoken many things of the *Kingdom of God*, Excellent Things have been Revealed to us by his Holy Spirit, and the same Spirit hath given us Utterance, to speak of the great things of the Law of God; yet many, that have been constant Hearers of these things, remain Ignorant, and remain Insensible, because they are not Exercised in their own Measure of the Grace and Light of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which they should receive and understand them.

This hath made me many a time to Lament the Case of many of the People of this City and Nation, who are Daily Hearers of the *Word of God* Preached, and retain it not in their Hearts: The Sowers are gone out to sow, but many receive it in the *High-Way-Ground*; the Way that every thing can pass in, there they receive the Word sown, and the Devil catcheth it away; and though they have heard Excellent things, of the Strength, Ability and Power of God, that he ministreth to his People, they remain so weak and so feeble, that they are blown away with every Blast of the Adversary, with every Temptation, and with every Snare and Gin that is laid for them, they are caught, and ensnared, and taken; and so these come to Meetings.

Meetings again, and again, one Year after another: I might say unto you, Wherefore do you come? It may be you may say, We desire to be satisfied; we desire Satisfaction for our Souls. Do you so? Then I tell you, You may come all the Days of your Life, and want it, and lay down your Heads in Sorrow at last for all that. For all the Words in the World will never communicate of that Heavenly Life and Vertue which brings true Satisfaction to the Soul, unto any, except to those that have an Exercise in their own Mind and Spirits, in that which they have of God; they must first be brought to know the Way they should walk in, and to believe that is the Way: When People believe this is my Way, the Light within is my Way, the Grace of God is my Way; that searches and tries my Heart, that is my Way I must walk in, speak in, and think in, and do all that I have to do in; when I believe this is that Way, then this Belief obligeth Men to a constant taking heed to their Ways, to their Footsteps. And here they that are thus Exercised, are in a tender Care every Step they take in their Way; and so perhaps they may receive great Benefits by hearing the Reports they do Daily make unto them that were in the Way before them, and have Travelled further in it, than they ever yet have done. The Experiences of the Servants of the Lord, are Daily helpful to them, and they are Daily Comforted, Strengthened, and Confirmed, to
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hear how they have sped, that have travelled through thy Condition, and through thy present State; what Helps and Advantages they have met with, will do thee Good, and Comfort thee: But what is this to those that are not in the Way, that have not Faith in the Way? And if they have an overly Belief of the Doctrine and Way it self, yet they are not exercising themselves to walk therein; for they do but as the rest of the World hear, saying, This good Man, and the other good Man, made a good Sermon. Why was it good? Not for any good they found by it, but because he raised his Doctrine well, and proved it from Scripture, therefore we are obliged to believe it.

But now this good Doctrine, if it be never so good, and never so firmly proved, it brings forth no Fruit to the amendment of Life, saving in them that believe, saving in them where there is an Exercise in the Fear of God, where People are concerned for their Soul's Satisfaction. For they that look for true Satisfaction by this, or that, or the other way of the World, they spend their Days without Satisfaction, and so at last they Die in Sorrow; and so it will be to the end of this, and all succeeding Generations.

And therefore my *Friends*, tho' I confess it is not a Grief to me, but a Joy, to see People willing to hear the Truth, and to come together in great Assemblies; though I say, this is not a Grief but a Joy, for I am not
about,

about to discourage them that so do: Yet I must be plain with you, I know what I say, and you will know it too one Day, that all this meeting together, and gathering in great Assemblies, and Hearing what is Preached to you, with never so great Delight to your Minds, it will do you no good, unless you believe in the Grace of God, that hath been ministred to you through Jesus Christ.

And when People come to this Foundation, and build on it, and grow every Day more and more diligently in the Exercise of their Minds towards God; and examine their Way, and examine their Footsteps, how they have walked Yesterday, how they have walked this Day, and how their Minds are exercised at this present, whether they have answered the Grace of God; when they come to be thus exercised, they will look upon themselves, as bound in Duty, to give Account to God every Moment, for their Thoughts, Words and Actions: When they are thus Exercised, then let them come to Meetings in the Name of God, and hear the Experiences of them that have gone before them, and treasured up Sayings in their Hearts for their Encouragement, and they will find this will be an help to them: But if People go and build up a Religion upon the Sayings of this and that Man; nay, were it upon the Sayings of Christ himself and his Apostles, if they were here to Preach to them,
and

and build a Religion upon their Words, and Sayings, and Doctrines, without the Operation of the Spirit of God upon their Hearts, inclining them to Holiness and Righteousness, this Religion will do them no good: By this to make the best of it, they might make a shift to reach to a Form of Godliness; People conforming themselves outwardly, to the outward Precept or Command from without, it might amount to a Form of Godliness; yet it might be supposed and granted, that the Power of God, the Power of Divine Life and Vertue, where it comes it doth sanctifie and season the Mind, and bring Men into an awful Reverence of the Living God their Maker, that they might stand in awe, and not Sin against him; for here is the Life of Religion. And this hath a great difference from the manner of building of Men in Religion, that many have been acquainted withal. They tell us, our Fathers before us, were built up in these Forms, and Modes, and Methods of Religion, they received so many Doctrines, Ordinances, Sacraments and Articles; and when these are Received, Believed and Professed, there's a Saint for you, there's a Child of God, and a Member of the Church. How came he to be so? He was Instructed in all the Principles of the Christian Religion, and subject to all the Ordinances of the Church, saith one; and saith another, He could speak Excellently concerning the Doctrine of our Religion; therefore he is certainly a Child of God.

God, and a Member of Christ; But all this Acceptation of the Principles of the Christian Religion, of Doctrines, and Ordinances, and Sacraments: All this will not amount to the Purifying of the Heart, and Cleansing and Purging of the Conscience; nay, it would not come to a far less matter, to the bridling of the Tongue; but they would be in a Passion upon the least Provocation, and upon the least Distaste and Disgust given them, their Tongues would run over into Wrath, and into Wantonness, and Prophane-ness; and upon any Occasion and Provocation given, their corrupted Words would prevail, and lead them into Deceit and covetous Practices; and though the Fruits and Works of the Old Man remain, yet they will follow the Principle of the Regenerate, as far as they consist in Words.

If our Lord Jesus Christ say, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*: Then this old Corrupt Birth it will preach a Sermon upon this Text, and profess that: How many have taken upon them to preach a Sermon, upon some Excellent Sayings of Christ, that never knew what Regeneration was; for the *New Birth* always hath a *New Life*; but they have lived the Life of Carnal Corrupt Fallen Man, and yet preach a Sermon upon Regeneration: Thus the Minister hath done, and the People have believed him, and have been gathered into such and such a Church; for most put them-
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selves into one Church or other; they have been covenanted Christians, Members of a Church; but they have wanted that which makes a Christian a Religious Christian Man, viz. *The Answer of a good Conscience.*

A True Christian Man, He is bound to be an obedient Child unto God, that begat him of his own Will, by the Word of Truth; and such an one may be in Expectation of an Answer of Peace from God, through Jesus Christ, in whom he hath believed, and by whom he is reconciled to God. If you take away this New Birth, and this New Nature, and an Answer of Peace, from God to the Soul: Then tell me what the Christian Religion is, more than the Religion of *Heathens* and *Pagans*, that worship Stocks and Stones? All the rest is but Talk, and Men are never a whit the better for it: One Man may excel another in Talk and Discourse: A Debauched Man many times hath been able to talk at a great Rate, and to speak notable things; and some have been ready to say, It is pity a Man of such Excellent Parts should lead a wicked Life: But Alas! If such a one can talk of the Power of God still, and the Devil hath Power over him; or if he speak highly of the Wisdom of God, yet he himself plays the Fool abominably: So that by such a kind of Life, and such a kind of Religion, People never attain to Satisfaction, after Forty, or Fifty, or Sixty Years spent therein, they must after all, lay down their Heads

in Sorrow, when they have been constant Keepers to the Church, and Sayers of their Prayers, and Receivers of the Sacrament, and stedfastly believe the Articles of the Creed, and make Profession of all the Parts of Christian Religion; yet after all, they must lay down their Heads in Sorrow: Why, what is the matter? What did they want? They wanted Faith in the Power of God, that should enable them to overcome their Sin, and live in Obedience to God; and they wanted to their outward Profession, the *Answer of a good Conscience, and Justification through Christ the Mediator.*

They talked of Redemption through Jesus Christ, but were never redeemed from their Sins: This is evident and plain, that there is no speaking to the contrary: If you see a Drunkard, or a Swearer, or an Unclean Person, and if he shall Preach, and make an excellent Sermon of the Redemption that there is in Christ, and therein tell you, what great Benefits they receive by Christ, that are true Believers; and that Christ is a Redeemer, and redeemeth them from the Curse of the Law, and from the Guilt of Sin, and reconcileth them to God; so that he that was under the Curse of the Law, and an Heir of Wrath, is now a Child of God: Now if you come to examine this Man, and ask him, Whether he is Redeemed, and delivered from Sin, that now Sin hath no more Dominion over him? He will tell you, No: What not
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Redeemed, when thou hast been a Believer thus long? Art thou still under the Bondage and Captivity of Sin? Then thou art under the Government of some other Master than Christ; some other Master hath Rule over thee, if thou art not redeemed from thy Swearing, Lying, Drunkenness, and Unclean-ness; if thou art led to these things, thou art under the Power and Government of some other Master than Christ. Now this hath startled People, when they have been thinking, that they have been baptized Persons, and professing Christians, and they have flattered themselves with a groundless Confidence, Let me Die when I will, this Night, before to Morrow, I shall be saved by Christ; I am an Heir of the Kingdom of God: Let me tell thee, thou dishonourest the Name of God by thy Presumption.

When People come to examine Matters, and read over the Book of their Consciences, and see what Servants they have been to the Devil; how the Devil hath led them up and down at his Will, those that were covenanted Christians, Followers of Christ; when the Devil hath said to them, Follow me; then, I will sayest thou: When the Devil saith, Follow me to this and the other evil thing; I see I cannot resist; I cannot withstand the Temptation; I was overtaken, and surprized, and led away by such an Allurement, and ensnared by it: I pray thee leave off Professing, for thou disgracest the Lord Jesus Christ; He
and

and his Disciples did not so: He was tempted as thou art, and his Disciples were tempted as thou art; so were Christians of old time; and Christians that live in the present time do meet with many Temptations, but they are not at the Devil's Beck and Call, as thou art.

The Apostle *Paul*, in one Passage of his Life, we find he came to be awakened and startled: There was a Light from *Heaven* shone about him, he heard the Voice of Christ speaking to him, *Acts*, 9. 4. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* And he said, *Who art thou Lord?* And the Lord said, *I am JESUS whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks:* And he trembled and Astonished said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* He was brought to this pass after his Convincement, but before he was overcome and led Captive; and when he would do Good, Evil was present with him: *To Will* (saith he) *is present, but how to Perform I know not;* but he did not call this an happy State. He did not say then, I am in a good Condition, when I am led Captive by the Devil at his Will: The good that I would do, I do not, and I am carnal, and sold under Sin: He doth not say, This is a good Condition, I am satisfied with it; see what he calls that Condition, he gives it a righter Name than many do now-a-days, that say, This is the State of God's Children; that the best of all God's Children have not Power to live without Sin, and

and overcome all their Corruptions, that they sin in their best Duties, and can do nothing but sin, and that Sin mixeth it self in all their Holy Duties and Performances: Many of their Ministers tell them, That if they think they can perform any Duty without Sin, they deceive themselves, and run the hazard of being Accursed. But they learn'd not this of Christ, but of some other Master. *Paul* gave this State another Name; I would you were as wise when you are in this State and Condition: *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me?* I see a Wretchedness in this Condition; I see, if I be not delivered out of it, I must perish to all Eternity. This is not a State to live in; who can live at ease in such a Condition as this? Who can chuse but cry out, Who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin and Death? Alas! we hear no such Cry now among Priests or People, and seperate Congregations: I fear this Cry is almost lost among us, unless it be some few that hear the Vice of God, and feel such a Stroke of the Divine Power as *Paul* did, and answer to the Heavenly Voice. I confess that my self have heard such a Cry, and have been sensible of my woful Captivity and Bondage, by reason of Sin. And though I had a Mind to do good, I could not do it; it was my desire that I might sin no more, I would not sin against the Lord, if I could help it; and when I would do Good, I found that Evil was present with me; but I was far from

from sitting down there, and saying, This is the State and Condition of God's People; it is as well with me as it was with the Apostle Paul, therefore I will sit down in this State: The People of God cannot find Satisfaction in such a State as this; though I confess, that God's peculiar People at first came to this State, for their Conviction, and the Opening of their Minds, and Enlightning their Understandings, to see the Evil of their Ways; but they do not come to this State, as to their Rest, and then Cokes themselves up, as being in the Condition of the Children of God; but they give their State a right Name, and cry out, *O wretched Man that I am!* What a miserable Condition am I fallen into! I did not see it before: Now mine Eyes are opened, now my Understanding is Illuminated, now I see that the Corruption of my Nature prevails against the Grace of God; and when I would join with the Grace of God, and the Motions of his Holy Spirit, the Enemy is present to lead me away; I am not now in a Happy State, but I am come to be convinced of my miserable and wretched State and Condition; if some way or other be not found for my Deliverance, I shall never see the Face of God with Comfort. Then comes that Cry, *Who shall deliver me?* Thus the Apostle Paul (*Rom. 7.*) sets forth the State of his Convincement, and how miserable a Condition he was in: Then he goes further, and tells you how it was

with him: *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* O I have cause enough to thank God, I am not a Wretched Man now, I am not Carnal, sold under Sin; I am not led Captive by the Devil at his Will now. Why, what is the Matter? Saith the Apostle, *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, hath set me free from the Law of Sin and Death.* Here is something to Glory, and to Comfort the Soul in: The Law of the Spirit of Life triumphed in his Soul, and delivered him from the Law of Sin and Death, and redeemed him from the Power of Sin, and made him serve God with Freedom and Liberty. *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord:* I would have all come to this, to thank God; not only in Words, but Reality, in Deed and Truth. For one may teach a Parrot to talk over these Words; but it is the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, that will make you free from the Law of Sin and Death.

This is a hard Lesson, therefore you must go Home into your own Consciences, before you can make a right Judgment of things, and give a right Answer to your selves. The Law of the Spirit of Life will set thee free from the Law of thy Passion, and of thy Pride and Covetousness, and Sensuality, and the Law of thy Carnal Inclinations. Art thou set free from these?

Now when People come to examine themselves, they have no way to flee to, but one of these two; either to buckle close to a Daily Cross, or to trust to the Lord Jesus

for their Deliverance; who hath Enlightned them, to see their wretched and woful State; and Illuminated their Understandings, that they might come to him, in order to their being delivered from the Dominion of Sin.

The biggest part of the World think this is a thing impossible, and therefore do not hope to be set free from the Bondage of their Sins. Which of these Ways is it that thou takest? I am afraid many of you have taken the wrong Way: I judge no Body in particular, but I speak this in Faichfulness and Love to your Souls.

If there be any Body here, that are sensible of their Sins, and in a Captivated State under Sin and Satan, and have despaired of ever being set at Liberty, and have said, It is a vain thing to expect it; for some Learned Men have told them, That there is no Deliverance from Sin in this World, therefore it is in vain for me to strive, in vain for me to engage my self into a continual Care and Conflict, in a continual Warring and Watching against Sin; for this Deliverance can never be obtained in this Life: It is in vain to seek for a thing that can never be found, and to strive for that which can never be obtained. If there be any such here present, I have this to say to them, That the Lord, in his Infinite Mercy, hath done Two great things for you, to help you out of this Despair, of obtaining a full Deliverance from the Bondage of your Sins.

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First,

First, God hath placed a Witness for himself in your Bosoms, in your Consciences. Let me ask you, Have ye not got Victory over many Sins and Temptations, that you have been assaulted with, from your Childhood to this Day? I might challenge any Person in this Assembly, that when a Temptation hath been presented before you, hath there not been something within you, to tell you of the Danger of complying with it? Hath not thy Conscience warned thee, and called upon thee, O take heed, do not this evil Thing, do not Cheat thy Neighbour, do not commit this Sin; whether Drunkenness, or Unclean-ness, or whatsoever Sin thou wert tempted to: Now, didst thou join to that Voice in thine one Conscience? And did it not help thee over the Temptation? And when thou escaped the Sin, wast thou not glad of it, and rejoyced that thou got Victory over it? Satan laid a Snare, and an Opportunity before me, to commit such a Sin; but I did not join with it, and now I am glad of it. It was not only the Devil's Fault, for he came to his own, but there was an evil Inclination in my Heart to it: How came it to pass thou did not do it? I knew it was a Sin against the Lord. How didst thou know that? I knew in my Conscience, that if I did it, I must sin against Light, and against Conviction, and against Grace received; and that was the Reason I did not do it. Thus thou acknowledgedst thine one Conscience helped thee against the Temptation.

Now

Now I appeal to all your Consciences, that hear me this Day, whether God hath not done this Kindness for you; and there is none here but hath been sometime helped out of Temptation? I do not believe that ill of any, that they comply with all the Temptations they meet with, but the Light in their Consciences hath shewn them the Evil of Sin, and they have been kept out of it, and they have been glad of it afterwards.

Now this is one great Kindness God hath done for every one of you, in order to help you out of this Despair of being delivered from your Sins.

Despair, in the common Notion of it, is that which makes a Man doubt of his Eternal Salvation: *I shall go to Hell when I die; there is no Mercy for me.* This Despair hath so wrought upon People, that many have lost their Wits, and common Sense, and at last made away themselves; many have been Distracted and Undone in this World, while they lived in it, and at last have dispatched themselves out of it. And there is another Despair; a Despair of getting Victory over their Corruptions, and obtaining a Freedom from Sin: This latter Despair, this Nation is generally fallen into; though the Effects of the other Despair is Lamentable to behold, the Effects of this will be as bad one Day, if not prevented by rectifying that Mistake Men lie under. When

I despair of the Power of God to help me, and of the Grace of God, and of the Good Will of God for my Deliverance; if thou wilt not join with the Grace of God, and the Power of God that is ready to help thee, and give thee Deliverance from thy Sins, the Consequence of it will be Dreadful at the last. Therefore believe in that Grace of God, which hath helped thee against some Temptations, and given thee Victory over some Sins, that it will, if thou faithfully join with it, give the Victory over all.

Secondly, Consider God hath done another Kindness for thee, He hath sent his *Light and Truth* into thy Heart, to engage thee in a War against Sin: There are a great many Faithful Soldiers of Christ, that have fought this Battle before you, and have gotten the *Victory*, and they will tell you, They never went out to War in their own Names, but in the Name of the Lord JEHOVAH: When they relied upon him, and in Meekness and Fear waited upon him, He gave them Power to overcome; and they were made Conquerors, and *more than Conquerors*; for they have overcome those Enemies, that sometimes overcome them; and Christ hath fixed and settled them in this Conquest, never to be overcome more. Here is both an Outward and an Inward Evidence: The Outward Evidence will do you no good, 'till you come to lay hold of the Inward Evidence in your own Hearts; then the Outward Evidence that God

sends,

ends, will be serviceable to you. Therefore my Friends, I tell you (as I said before) Nothing will satisfy the Soul, but the Vertue and Life that flows into it, from the Fountain of Life : Here is the Way to it. If you should hear of a Treasury, and Store of Bread laid up for all that are willing to come to it ; if you knew not the way to come to it, and were ready to perish with Hunger, What a Cry would there be among you ? If a Man should come and tell you where there is such a *Treasury of Bread*, when you are ready to perish with Hunger, and tell you the Way to it is Intricate and Narrow, but that he himself hath been there, and that he can tell you the ready way to it, and that he himself had Relief and Supply, and great Plenty bestowed upon him, and that he would bring you thither ; O how Welcome would such a one be to you ! O that you were as wise in spiritual Things ! And as much concerned for your Souls, as you are for your Bodies ! and would take the Advice of God's Ministers ! They would turn you to the Light within, the Grace of God in your own Hearts, which you are Partakers of. Follow the Duties of your own Consciences, speaking to you in the Name of God, and you will come quickly where there is Bread enough. By that Light within, you will see your State is not so good as you imagined it was. This Oracle within, is that you must live withal, and dwell withal ; you must go home with it, and

lie down with it, and you must rise with it, and follow the Dictates of it; if you do so, before the Week be out, you will have Experience to tell me, if I should come and ask you, I have gotten more Victory over my Sins, by following the Dictates of the Light and the Grace of God within my own Bosom, than by all my Reading, Hearing, and Praying and performing other Duties: Make a Trial of this, and you will find the Presence of God with you, and that he is a God at hand, and not afar off; and if you buckle on your spiritual Armour, the Captain of your Salvation will not be far off, but be present before you. Therefore keep your Eye unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your Faith, and you will be *able to do all things through Christ that strengthens you*; and you will be able to conquer those Sins and Temptations that have conquered you. And the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, will break down the Body of Sin and Death, and bring you into the Glorious Liberty, which God hath prepared for his Children.

His Prayer after Sermon.

Most Glorious God of Life and Power,
and of Everlasting Kindness; A God
of long Suffering and Patience, else we had
not been here at this Day.

O! Lord, we are Monuments of thy Mercy;
thou hast spared us long, and called us
in a Day when we turned our Ear from Thee:
Thou hast stretched forth thy Hand all the
Day long, and thou hast gathered a *Remnant*,
and hast brought a little *Remnant* of the
lost Sheep of the Remnant of the *Israel*, that
they might partake of the Pastures of Life.

And powerful Father of Life, all our Souls
have been greatly Refreshed and Comforted,
since we came to understand and comprehend,
with the rest of thy Saints, the Height,
and Length, and Breadth, and Depth of
thy Love, which in the Son of thy Love thou
hast revealed to us.

And, Blessed Father, our Souls Breathe
and Cry to thee, on the Behalf of Strangers,
which are *Aliens from the Common Wealth* of
Israel, that are yet Breathing and Enquiring
after thee, O Lord, and asking the way to
Zion: O Lord hear their Cry, and let their
Sighing and Complaining enter into thine
Ears, that all they, in whom thou hast begun
to kindle up Holy Desires after thee, may
have them grow into a Flame, and burn up
all

all their Enmity to thee, that so they may be purified by they Judgment, and receive of thy Heavenly Grace: This is the way which thou hast used with thy Children; thou hast commanded them to Worship thee in they Dwelling Place. Thou hast taken them into thy House, and fed them with the finest Wheat, refreshed them with thy loving Kindness, and filled them with thy Holy Spirit.

Dearest God of Love, this is the Purpose and Design of our Meeting together, That we may enjoy thy Presence, and feel the Operation of thy Word, and have Communion with thee, and thy Son Jesus Christ, through thy Holy Spirit: The way into Rest and Life is with thee; Thou canst open, and none can shut.

Lord open the Hearts of thy People, to receive of thy Goodness, to receive of thy Blessing, that so every one may be sensible that thou art at least knocking at the Door of their Hearts, that thou might have an Entrance; and bow the Hearts and Will of all to receive what thou givest, and hast to offer, to receive the Word of Life, by which thou are Quickening them; and kindle Holy Desires after thy self, that every one may receive it; that so Blessed God of Life, thy Glorious Work of Redemption may be caried on, and we may all feel it caried on upon our Souls.

Hear thy poor People, that are crying
to thee, the God of Gods, in *Zion*; that
are sensible of their Weakness and Feeble-
ness, and how unable they are to over-
come the Enemies of their Souls: Arise
in thy Power, O Lord, and these Ene-
mies shall be scattered. Let the Souls of
thy People be raised from the Dust, and
delivered from their Sin, that they may
rejoyce, and Praise thy Name for their De-
liverance.

Righteous God of Life, our Eyes are unto
thee, to set forth thy Glory, for thou hast
made bare thine Arm for the Salvation of
the Poor and Ncedy Souls, and thou hast
been stretching forth the Cords of thy Love,
to gather them that were scattered, and hast
been bringing Home to thee, those that were
hurried away in a dark and Cloudy Day.

Thou hast made us sensible of thy Ope-
rations, and hast constrained thy Servants
to Labour in the Word and Doctrine, for
the gathering of such home, that so they
and we may enter into thy Holy Covenant,
and may sound forth thy Praise to Ages
and Generations to come; that so, Holy
God of Life and Love, thou that hast saved
us with a marvellous Salvation, may'st re-
ceive for all thy Mercies and Blessings to thy
children, Praise, Glory, Honour, and Thankf-
giving, for thou alone art worthy, who art
God over all, Blessed for evermore, *Amen.*

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